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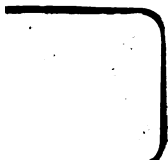
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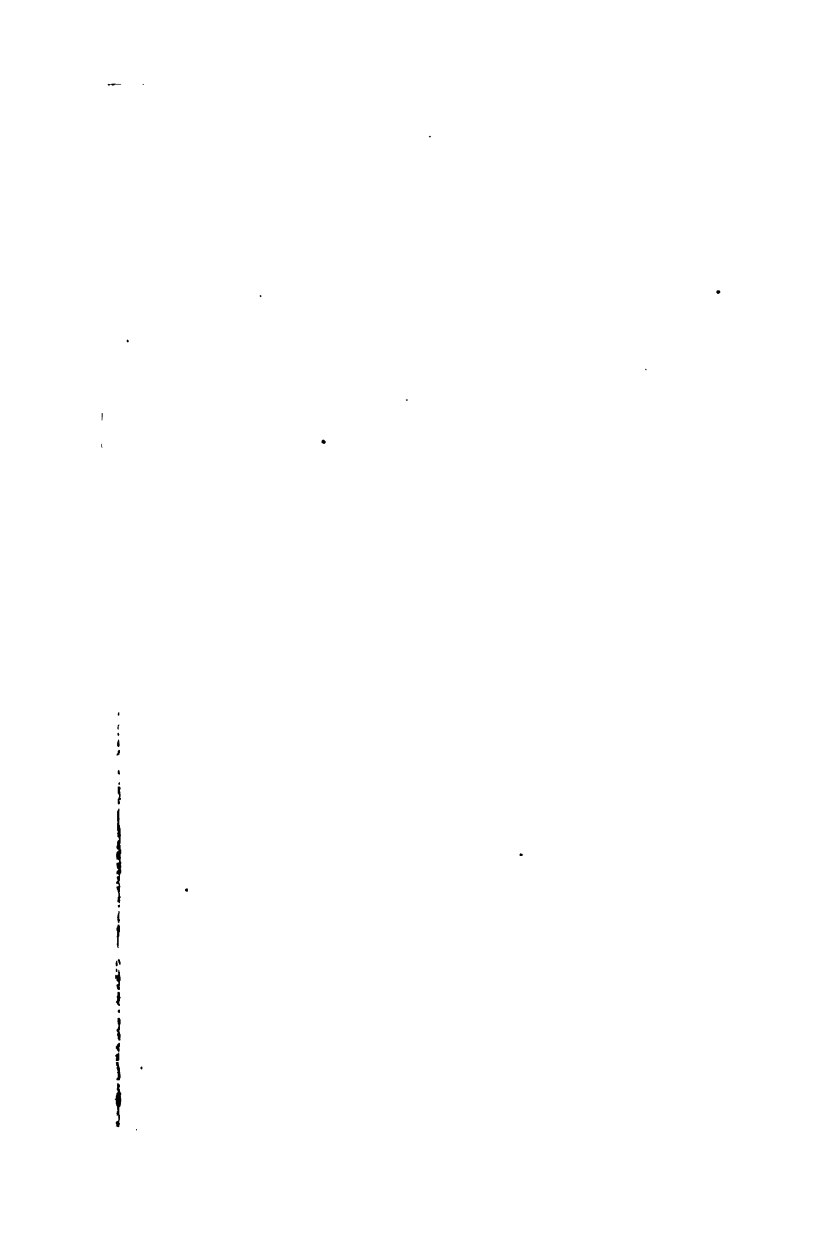


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PREFACE.

IN offering another production to the public, which has received my former ones with a kindness far beyond their desert, I think it due both to it and myself to make a few observations respecting the subject of my present tale.

A people persecuted for their religious faith have always seemed to me an object peculiarly adapted to stir up our deepest sympathies. Accordingly for many years—and particularly since reading Professor Wilson's exquisite "*Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life*"—the idea has fastened itself on my mind, that the suffering of my own countrymen, and the unswerving zeal with which they clung to the faith of their fathers, amid all perils and privations, during the dark period of penal proscription, would afford rich materials for interesting scenes and situations, had I the capability of moulding and combining them. How I may have succeeded in my attempt to exhibit a picture of my country, a century ago, the reader will speedily judge for himself. But, at all events, the slightest glance at the ensuing pages will convince him that, whatever may be my other defects, I have not sat down to write in any spirit of bigotry or rancorous acerbity. I have not written in such spirit, firstly, because intolerance is not inwoven in my nature, as

who lived and moved only in my own imagination, but—alas for our nature!—one whose accursed career has been, during the last century, the theme of numberless traditions, all illustrative of his fiend-like habits, and the polluted state of society, that could have produced and fostered so loathsome a reptile. Terrible were his acts: fearful was his fate. A respectable and intelligent farmer, whose father saw the body speedily after death, has told me, since the completion of the tale, that the accomplishment of his fate was precisely in the manner I have described.

I now close those brief observations, hoping the reader is anxious to commence the tale itself, as those who are blessed with a healthful appetite are, sometimes, impatient of even a short grace, and unfearingly confide my humble craft to the friendly pilotage of those whose kind assistance has thrice before steered me into harbour, and so tempted me to be a voyager once more.

SHAWN NA SOGGARTH;

OR,

THE PRIEST HUNTER.

CHAPTER I.

It was a late October day, in the year 17—, that two persons approached, from different directions, the little inlet of Kilglass, on the western coast of Ireland. It was a day of cloud and wind. Heavy masses of rack swept incessantly across the sky, while the waters of the generally calm and peaceful inlet, impelled by the fitful gusts, came tumbling and breaking in foam and spray on the rock-strewn shore, mingling their voice, in wild and melancholy accord, with those of the wind and sea-birds, as the latter circled and screamed unceasingly, as if rejoicing in the rising gale.

One of the persons alluded to, after looking intently seaward for a moment, turned his steps towards a solitary cabin, that stood beneath the shelter of a small hill, where the inlet, just close to its extremity, makes a slight bend. On reaching this he entered, while the other continued abroad, watching eagerly the movements of some boats immediately beyond the opening of the little

that, nothing checked by wind or wave, were plying rapidly between a neighbouring island and a vessel, whose masts were just visible, rising beyond the high headland at the mouth of the inlet.

There was a mixture of fun and fierceness in the expression of his broad and generally good-humoured countenance, as he turned his gaze frequently and impatiently from the boats, inland, while traversing, to and fro, a few yards of smooth beach, at a pace that threatened, despite the keenness of the ocean blast, to extract "the big drops" plentifully, should the movement last any length, from a body diametrically the reverse of "high in bone and low in flesh."

"By the hand of my father," he exclaimed, half jocularly, half seriously, "the vagabonds are doing me famously, and there will not be a pound or a gallon left by the time those lazy rascals come up, if they come at all." He looked again impatiently inland. "The curse of my grandmother and her seven generations on Cornet Ffolliot and his shot," he continued: "it has given them the alarm completely. The vessel will be emptied speedily, and then I may whistle for my share of the cargo, which was to have made the fortune of Charley Rorke; and the said Charley Rorke must continue a paltry guager to the end of his natural life, should I be allowed to make a quiet exit. I wish I had remained with those lazy big-booted troopers, instead of bolting on before them. They'll be sure to lose their way or flounder in a bog, to be revenged on me for putting them on the road so early this morning. Well, at all events, I'll have the comfort of reporting the puppy Ffolliot's conduct to the board, as his shot

must have been meant for a warning, and so to balk me. But what chance has a still half-suspected Conformist of being credited, in opposition to so staunch a Protestant as the grandson of one of Cromwell's lucky fifiers?—Phew! there goes Charley's fortune to the moon," he concluded, as the vessel, having discharged her last boatload, instantly tacked to seaward, almost right in the wind's eye; "and I only wish I had the trial of those lazy ruffians by court martial. May be I wouldn't teach them more speed on the next occasion. But there's no use now in waiting any longer here, to be deluged as an addition to our comfort." The rain was beginning to drive fiercely, and casting a last lingering look at the vessel, which was making way, despite the gale, on a southwest tack, he moved for the cabin, on entering which he found the first visitor ensconced at the fire, while the other occupants—an aged woman and two or three half-naked urchins—were gazing at his sinister countenance with something of fear, as he deepened the smoky atmosphere around by whiffs from the pipe he was enjoying.

There was no customary salutation between the visitors, though the person of each was well known to the other. But there was a villainous grin on the face of the smoker, as Charley Rorke, desiring the *colliagh* (old woman) jocularly to clear the way, drew a three-legged stool to the opposite side of the hearth, while a slight shudder agitated his portly frame, on finding himself in such close contact with his fellow-visitor.

"Oh! Mr. Mullowny," he exclaimed, after seating himself and looking up at his undesired companion, as if he had only then recognized him,

"I didn't expect to see *you* so far from head quarters."

"Poo! Mr. Rorke, we've both our own game to look afther. But I'm afeard that shot o' Cornet Ffolliot's spiled it on us both, this turn. The divle reward his ould skinflint father's son for it."

"How do you know it was Ffolliot fired?"

"Only bekase we seen him do it, as we wor hurryin' on to kill the two birds with one stone, while we had the sogers; an' we'd report him, too, for previntin' the king's sarvice, barrin' that there'd be but little chance o' gettin' satisfaction o' sich a loyalist an' a favourite o' Sir John's, as the Cornet, by sich as *us*."

"Who do you mean by *us*, fellow?"

"Why jist yoursel', to be sure, that every one knows has half the Pope in yer belly still, an' oursel', that's well known to be the best friend o' the Pope and his breed in all Connaught, an' Ireland to boot;" he grinned villainously again.

"How dare a low ruffian, like you, put yourself on a level with a gentleman born and bred?" asked Rorke, angrily, his choler completely raised.

"Arrah be aisy now, gauger Rorke," said Mulloyny, with the most impudent coolness, "aren't we both in the king's sarvice? You're employed to hunt smuggled whiskey, an' we're employed to hunt smuggled priests, that's beginnin', to our grief, to grow rather scarce ov late; an' I'd be glad to see the day ye'd be able to prove that we're not a betther man nor ever stood in the shoes o' yer father's son, an' that we didn't do more sarvice to king an' counthry nor all the dhrunken gaugers in Connaught."

"Insolent ruffian! don't you know I'm on duty,

and armed?" exclaimed Charley, in a voice almost inarticulate with rage, as he sprang from the stool and half unsheathed the blade of a sword-cane he carried.

"*We're* on duty as well as you, an' not impty-handed aither, ye'll find," said Mullowny, in the same cool tone, springing also from his stool at the same time, and drawing forth a large pistol from his breast. The colliagh and the urchins now rushed from the hearth to the door, uttering wild cries of "murdher! murdher!" But the disputants proceeded not to use their weapons, readily as they had appealed to them. The apprehension of what might be the result of the encounter, and its consequences, seemed to flash on the minds of both simultaneously, as they stood exchanging looks of defiance; but each, from various motives and in different degrees, feeling reluctance to commence, for so trivial a cause, an affray so likely to be a deadly one, from the weapons and personal strength and daring of the opponents. Charley Rorke was a man of powerful bone and muscle, though now, to be sure, a good deal encumbered with flesh, which did not, however, deprive him of that freedom of motion and high degree of activity frequently seen to accompany great fullness of body, particularly among persons leading active lives; and, from his fearless character, and the nature of his profession, he was well habituated to personal encounters.

Of his opponent's remarkable personal appearance we shall present the reader with a somewhat more lengthened portrait, as he is to play a conspicuous part in our pages. In stature he was rather under the middle size, while the shoulders, which supported

a short, thick neck, surmounted by a bullet-shaped head, were by no means on a level, one aspiring some inches above the other. But then his arms were of unusual length, his chest of ample breadth, and the legs, that formed the pedestals to this superstructure, of that bowed description generally indicative of much strength and firmness of footing.

It was the countenance, however, that constituted the portion of Mullowny's person that, once seen, could not be easily forgotten. His complexion was colourless, and his features heavy and massive, though not deformed. But it was his deep-set eye, with its overhanging heavy brow, the numerous surmounting furrows that belonged not to his years—for he was a young man, though with but little of the lightness or buoyancy of youth in his person or aspect—and the character of his large and prominent mouth—that most eloquent of all our features, that told, as distinctly and more truly than words might tell, that within rioted passions, which had never been checked, fierce, relentless, uncontrollable, though at times there was a cat-like expression of cunning mingled with the ferocity of the aspect.

During the moment or two that the intended combatants stood “in gloomy opposition set,” it struck Rorke that there was neither credit nor favour with “the ruling powers” to be gained by a conflict with Mullowny, while the latter recollected that the gauger was a person high in favour with the governor of the province and others in authority, owing to his pleasantry as a boon-companion and skill as a sportsman. Accordingly, the blade was again returned to its sheath and the pistol to its former resting place; and each party resumed his seat,

after Charley had ascertained at the door that it still rained violently, and that none of his party was yet in sight.

They had sat but a few minutes in angry silence when two other visitors entered the cabin; the one a young man with open expressive features, though bearing evident marks of long exposure to sun and wind. He was arrayed in a sailor's garb, and had altogether that bold, careless bearing indicative of a seafaring life. His companion was a tall, thin man, much more advanced in years, and of a pale and mild, but penetrating countenance, as far as could be judged from the portion of it distinguishable between the collar of the ample cloak in which he was muffled, and the overshadowing hat, which descended over his forehead to the very brows of a pair of deep-set, bright grey eyes.

There was an expression of wolfish joy in Mulowny's face, as he glanced triumphantly at Charley on the entrance of the strangers. This feeling was, however, by no means reciprocated by the gauger, who rose courteously from his seat to make room for the new visitors.

"A disagreeable day for travelling, gentlemen," he observed, as they seated themselves.

"Unpleasant enough, certainly, for those that wish for dry skins," rejoined the younger stranger, shaking the rain from his jacket liberally around him; "but it is no new story to have wet days on the Irish coast—at least such used to be the case."

"Then you have but lately arrived on our shores?"

"'Tis more than three years since I set foot on them before, and I fear that, during that interval, neither the climate nor the people have improved."

"Why, to be sure, the soil doesn't thrive with tories (rapparees), smugglers, or priests, that's *now* banished clane from among us, like as St. Patrick banished the vinomous sarpints," observed Mullowny, with one of his malignant grins.

"Mr. *Mullowny* is good authority on that head at least," remarked the gauger, laying a marked emphasis on the name of his late opponent, which he was determined the strangers should be apprized of, though he cared not to make his warning more distinct.

"I perceive saucy tongues still thrive in it, at all events," said the younger stranger, by a great effort curbing himself from using more violent language, while the blood rushed to his embrowned cheek and forehead, as he fastened his flashing eyes on Mullowny's countenance.

"It's yourself that's crowing saucily, my young bantam, an' if you can't give a betther account ov yerself an' yer comrade than I suspect you can, ye'll be like soon to meet with something worse nor words," rejoined Mullowny, returning the stranger's gaze with a fierceness equal to its own.

The stranger clapped his hand fiercely on the hanger attached to his side. But the gauger interposed, saying, "this is the second time, within an hour, that you, *Mullowny*, have endeavoured to provoke bloodshed, and with perfect strangers in the present instance, which I shall take care to inform Sir John of, this very day, by the hand of my father."

"An' which ov us 'll Sir John be afther b'lievin', seein' he had often raison to know before which ov us is the loyalest? An' may be I can't give infor-

mation that you could guess as well as me, that these *gintlemen* wor the laist taste suspicious, tho' you want to smother the law for thim."

"Never mind the lubber, sir," said the younger stranger, addressing Charley, "I'll soon teach to him pipe to a civiller tune;" and he drew his hanger.

"No, no, Frank—William—there must be no rioting. Recollect the business you are on," said the elder stranger, who had not before spoken, but had remained silently scrutinizing, with desultory but searching glances, the appearance and persons of the gauger and Mullowny. "Gentlemen," he continued, addressing himself to *them*, his voice having at once quieted his companion, "we are peaceful journeyers after long travel, that have dropped in here, perchance, to obtain a brief shelter from wind and rain; and it is neither our inclination nor interest to brawl. We are entire strangers to each other, too, as the gentleman has said, and *stranger* was wont to be a sacred name in Ireland. Surely, then, there can be no necessity that we, who may probably never meet again, should quarrel. Let us part then, in God's name, as we have met, in peace."

"We'll not part as aisy as that comes to I suspect, my ould buck," muttered Mullowny—and he looked for a moment as if he was about to spring at the throat of the last speaker. He did not, however, as he was aware that, in the case of a scuffle, he was more likely to experience hostility than assistance from the gauger, after what had passed; and, notwithstanding that the figure of the younger stranger was slight, it gave promise of much activity and endurance, while daring fearlessness spoke in eve—

line of his frank, open countenance, besides that he was evidently armed to the teeth.

"As we are not agreeing, the sooner we separate the better," observed Rorke, looking expressively from the elder stranger to the younger, as, from his own position, he first got sight of Ffolliot and the party, on the summit of a near hill. "*Frank Lynch*, you are in dangerous company, and those that are coming are not likely to be more friendly," he added in a whisper, as he passed the strangers, and dashed away towards the approaching dragoons, at a pace not easily reconcilable with a person, that would have scarcely required the aid of stuffing, to represent adequately the figure of the fat knight, honest Jack Falstaff himself.

The young man started as if thunderstruck, on hearing the whispered name. But he recovered himself instantly; and *his* eye, too, having caught the military party, he pointed them out silently to his companion, and they left the cabin immediately after, he moving out the last of the three, with a smile of defiance at Mullowny, and touching his hanger and pistol significantly as he went out.

Slowly they proceeded along the beach, the younger turning repeatedly towards the cottage, like some bold animal of chase suspicious of attack, but still prepared to battle to the death. Their apprehensions were groundless, however, for the present, as Mullowny, after having stood a moment at the cabin door, glaring from them to the gauger, and then moved some yards after them, as if determined to commit an assault at all risks, suddenly changed his direction and set off in the wake of Charley Rorke, and at a speed overtopping even his; leaving the

terrified crone and urchins, who were stationed at the rere of the cabin, to venture into it again.

"Cornet," whispered Rorke, as he panted up to the party, "I will forgive you even that cursed shot, though you blew away clear with it the best chance Charley Rorke ever had, or ever may have, if you balk that scoundrel, Mullowny, who, you see, is breaking his bones to lead you on another scent—"

"But if he has Sir John's orders."

"That's all in my eye and Betty Martin. You know you came on my requisition—I wish (in an under tone) you were stuck in a boghole when I asked you—and if there's a chance of doing anything still, it must be by our scattering ourselves in this direction, to try to interrupt some of the rascals."

"Halt—halt—I have orders for you, *Lieutenant Ffolliot*," was now loudly heard from Mullowny, who was nearing them fast.

"Recollect, Cornet, you are at present on the revenue service," said Rorke, eagerly.

"To the left wheel—scatter yourselves, men," said Ffolliot; and instantly the party pushed on separately, each man using the best speed he might, in a direction opposite to that taken by the strangers, who, having shaped their steps inland, speedily disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

THE ensuing day was the Sabbath. It was likewise a day of cloud and storm. The gale of the preceding day had died into an intense calm tow

morning ; and a mist, dense and impenetrable as the curtain that separates life from immortality, over-spread sky and ocean, concealing island, and peak, and headland. But towards noon the wind rose again, like a warrior after his repose, scattering the mist before it, and driving the waves, with turbulence and uproar, into an ocean cavern, in which were assembled, among others, two of the persons presented to the reader in the last chapter.

It was a wild and impressive scene, in which stood, among a considerable group, Frank Lynch and Father Bernard Kilger ; for the elder stranger was, as Mullowny suspected, an Irish priest who was returning to his native parish from Portugal, in the teeth of all danger and proscription. The waters had worn themselves a spacious entrance into an isolated cliff of the wild and lonely shore. Into this lofty and extended cavern the billows of the Atlantic, unbroken by rock or isle in their transit from the western world, poured at times, sweeping with them, with terrific noise, stones of various sizes, upturned from the depths of ocean, and shooting up columns of spray to the height of many feet, through two perforations worn in the cavern roof.

Here, from its wild and remote situation, was Mass wont to be occasionally celebrated for the widely scattered peasantry, at that dark and dreary period of Ireland's history, when it can scarcely be new to any reader that the worship of God, after the manner of his fathers, was visited on the Irish peer and peasant with penalty and fine—when their priests were hunted over the face of the land with an ardour far fiercer, because in the end greatly more remunerative, than that of the wolf-hunt in

elder times; and when expatriation was the law's merciful award for uttering the words of salvation to a proscribed people.

Here *now* was gathering stealthily, and one by one, a large portion of the population of that wild coast, while, here and there, scattered over the waters, was seen a straggling, well-filled boat, struggling with the waves; for, with the rapidity of the highland *firecross*, the word had spread that Mass would be celebrated on this day, for the first time during many months, in the cavern of *Pulna-thampul*; and the hardy and devoutly-inclined islanders were resolved to brave all perils from ocean and discovery, in order to be once more listeners to the prohibited word of God.

At the inner extremity of the cavern a large detached rock served for an altar. Behind it stood or knelt the priest, the space for a few yards around him being in general dry, except during stormy spring-tides, when its occupants had often run no small risk of being dashed to pieces by the stones hurled in by the tumultuous waves, and piles of which—the accumulation of ages—were now heaped in various directions. The day we now treat of, however, chanced to be one of neap-tide; and, though the wind was high, there was space for the members of the congregation to kneel along the side of the cavern on the slippery and weed-covered stones that bordered the agitated midstream.

The candles were lighted, and as their rays were reflected in quivering and broken lines on the tossed waters—and partially revealed and partly threw into deeper shadow its rugged sides and splintered roof—the cavern, into which the light of the gloomy

day had penetrated but dimly, with its grouping and colouring, as well as its external adjuncts, would have offered to the painter's eye a most striking picture.

The tall figure and pale features of the priest, looking still paler in the dim light; the male peasants bowed in devotion, with ear erect to catch the remotest *unaccustomed* sounds, among whom were distinguishable a few, besides Frank Lynch, in sailors' garb; and the females, in their blue and scarlet cloaks with kerchiefed heads—these formed the figures of the interior: while abroad, as the mist swept momentarily away, were distinguishable the boundless reach of tempestuous ocean, with an occasional boat borne triumphantly on, or turmoiling amid its waves, and a casual glimpse of the gigantic mountain-range looming in the far-off distance.

The ceremony proceeded, and the screams of the restless sea-fowl sweeping round the cliff, added a wilder solemnity to it; while the roar of the waves, as they rushed into the cavern or broke thunderingly against the neighbouring cliffs, might have seemed to the imaginative ear no inappropriate organ-peal for that wild cavern-cathedral.

The Mass was scarcely half concluded, when the voice of the scout who had been left abroad to give warning, should danger approach, was heard above winds and waves shouting "the throopers—the bloody throopers, an' *Shawn na Soggarth*."

Instantly there was wild terror and confusion in the cavern. Prayers were arrested in their utterance. The candles were quenched—the sacred book closed—the wine spilled—the vestments stripped; and priest and flock, male and female, the aged and the young, were scrambling amid the slippery rocks

in their eagerness to escape. Some fled along the shore, in various directions; others pushed off in the boats, to buffet with wind and tide; while a few were necessitated to betake themselves to swimming after the nearest boat, to escape the dreaded troopers, who were advancing rapidly under the guidance of the far and evil-famed *Shawn na Soggarth*, the redoubted priest-hunter, and who was no other than Mullowny, the reader's acquaintance of yesterday.

Either the scout had been negligent, or the troopers had used great precaution in their approach, as they had neared the cliff closely when his alarm was given. Yet, so rapid had been the movements of the terrified congregation from the cavern, that when the party came up, there were, out of nearly three hundred, but two individuals still scrambling at the mouth of the cavern—the one a very aged and nearly blind female peasant, the other her grandson, a fine athletic young fellow, who had remained, in spite of all danger, to aid her tottering steps.

"*Michaul ma graw* (my love), lay me here. Bad as they are, the sogers 'll not mind to harm a poor ould blind colliagh. But do *you* make off, as they'd surely hurt you, or dhrag you to jail, like as they did Andy Horkan last aisther, an' thin what ud your poor granny do?"

"No, granny, I wont stir an inch till *you're* safe; why, they'd make no more bones o' skiverin' you than they'd make o' guttin' a dog. But have courage for a minnit or two, an' we'll be both safe. Wan o' the boats is puttin' back for us—hilloo!"

"*Michaul*, they're on us inready, for I hear their steps. Lay me down, a *vick ma chree* (son of my heart). Av they kill me idsel,' what matthers an

unsigified ould colliagh? an' maybe I'd never be so fit to die as this blessed minnit."

Without wasting more words, Michaul took his grandmother in his arms and sprang forth from the cavern.

"That's the dog ov a priest in the next boat," shouted *Shawn na Soggarth* (by this name, as that by which he is best remembered, we shall for the future designate Mollowny), as he approached the cliff, "an' *thau ma keese bleen echy*," (my year's rent is paid)—his usual expression on getting sight of a priest—"if we can pin him—boys don't let him escape. It's the noted Father Kilger himsel', as I suspected yistherday, an' ye have liberty to shoot him as he's a returned priest."

Nothing loth, some half-dozen of the troopers, that first reached the cliff, fired at the boat; harmlessly, however, for her occupants, though two of the bullets struck her side; and before the pieces were reloaded she was out of shot range.

It was at this moment that *Michaul* emerged from the cavern, bearing forth his grandmother.

"Ha!" exclaimed Shawn, as he perceived them, "we have a brace o' the mass-goers, an' *they* shant escape us any how"—and he bounded forward to grapple with *Michaul*. But before he could reach him the unfortunate peasant was struck in the knee by a shot, fired either at random or with intent to kill, and fell with a shattered leg, while the wretched old woman threw herself beside him, with the wildest expressions of grief, and the most fearful imprecations on the ruthless hand that had done the deed. In vain did the sufferer, effectually mastering all expressions of his agony, for her sake, assure her he

was but slightly hurt, and that it would signify nothing.

"No, no, *Michaul*, don't be a desaver now, you that never desaved me. I know they have, my darlin' *mock* (son) kilt, that wouldn't hurt a mouse himsel' for hearin' the word o' God an' thrying to save his poor ould granny; an' may God an' the Virgin reject thim at the last day that did id!"

"Granny, granny, it's a sin an' a shame to be cursin' an' blasphemin' that way jist afther hearin' mass; and it wont get God an' the Virgin's help for me."

"It *is* a sin an' a shame, ye ould harridan," exclaimed Shawn, as he reached them; "it's proud ye ought to be, that he was near gettin' a dacent death, an' savin' the hangman a job."

Dont b'lieve him, granny. They cant *hang* us, any how."

Four of the troopers now, touched by the unflinching fortitude with which the wounded man endured his agony, bore him forward on their shoulders, with somewhat of tenderness, till they obtained one of the low cars of the period, to convey him to the county jail, accompanied by his grandmother, still venting mingled lamentations and curses, despite her dread of Shawn and the troopers.

"You've brought us a verry nice journey, Mистер Shane, for nothing at all as I can see," said troop-sergeant-major Heaviside, as the last boat disappeared round a neighbouring headland.

"Yes! damn the follow and his priests!" exclaimed another of the party, "he ought to be shot himself as well as them."

"To be sure, Sarjent Heaviside," rejoined Shawn,

"your fat guts is bettther fitted for the chesnut nor for leapin' bogs or climbin' hills. But haven't I more raison to grumble nor you. *You'll* be paid exthra allowance for this day's work tho' my boy's given me the slip fairly—I'll pin him yet tho', an' soon I'll be bound. But let us sarch the cavern, an' thry if we cant find some one else to help us to more payment for our day's labour."

He was followed into the cavern by some of the troopers. But the search was fruitless. No one could be found; and the searchers in wantonness, and, perhaps, with some indefinite hope that a lurker might still be started from rock or crevice, fired several shots, the loud and repeated echoes of which, as they were swept forth from the cavern, startled the scattered fugitives and accelerated their speed.

Nothing could, indeed, be more startling than the contrast between the late solemnity of the scene, its low-breathed prayers to God, and the wild and terrific uproar produced by the shots, with the mingled laughter-shouts, and imprecations, of the persecuting men, according as the individuals of the party were affected by their disappointment.

CHAPTER III.

THE boat, in which were the priest and Frank, after having coasted rapidly with the wind for about half a league, again put to shore to allow them to debark for the purpose of continuing their flight by land.

"We shall have a better chance of safety by separating here," said the priest. "Farewell then; and

I trust neither impetuosity nor fears will disable you from fulfilling your intentions.

"I *will* be calm, and as for fears they seldom trouble me, however the wind may blow. But is not your own course, Father Bernard, more beset with dangers than mine?"

"O, I knew the perils I was to brave before I quitted Portugal, though I certainly did not expect to be recognized and pursued at my very landing. But if our path be dangerous, it is the path of duty; and, whatever evils may beset it from men, God and the good angels are over us; and light will I esteem any hardships or dangers I may have to undergo, if I am enabled, even in secret and by stealth, to administer occasionally the bread of life to my famishing countrymen. O, my young friend, you know not the strength of the ties that bind a faithful pastor to a persecuted flock, and can scarcely imagine how the comforts and elegancies of refined life were turned to poison by the accounts I occasionally received of the wretched state of my unfortunate parishioners, excluded by bloody statutes from the hope and the consolation which the practice of the true faith might impart, amid all the blackness of their worldly sufferings, or you would feel that personal hardship or peril, however imminent, would weigh but as straws against the chance of administering the holy offices of religion to those broken down still more by spiritual than by bodily privations. Again farewell. In three days we may meet again in Ballintubber, if Providence afford us protection till then; and I hope you will be induced to give up the companionship of those fierce and lawless men I now find you associated with. May the grace of

God be with you." He bestowed a parting benediction on his companion, which was reverently received; and they separated, each taking a different direction. Our course lies for the present with Frank Lynch, who, pushing on through bog and over mountain paths, and avoiding town and village, made his way, with rapid steps, towards Ballintubber.

Frank Lynch was a young man of high respectability, by hereditary descent, but of impetuous passions, and, owing to the penalties then imposed on the instruction of Catholics, of but very limited education. He had, some three years previously, through some wild acts of his own and the persecution of the times, been obliged to fly to the continent, whence he had just returned, and was now proceeding to visit, at all risks, his uncle, Sir Edmund Lynch, who (he had learned) had been dispossessed of seat and property by his son Robert, and who was, in consequence, sinking fast into the grave.

It was nearing the sunset of the following day when he reached the fine remains of the Abbey of Ballintubber, on whose grey and ivied walls the melancholy October sunshine was shedding a saddening light, completely in unison with the scene. There it was, the grey old pile, familiar as the prayers of childhood, and utterly unchanged in its solemn loneliness since his last visit to it; and wild as were the last scenes he had been occasionally engaged in, the recollection of that visit, and its occasion, affected him so strongly that he leant, for a moment, overpowered, against the side of the low gothic door-way ere he entered it.

The ruins of Ballintubber Abbey are among the

finest in Ireland, and decidedly the finest monastic remains in Mayo. Cong Abbey is distinguished for its historic associations and richly wrought entrance—Moynes, for its preservation and beautiful situation, near the estuary of the river Moy; but both are greatly inferior to Ballintubber in extent, grandeur of arches, and exquisite tracery. The situation of Ballintubber is low, and, being without a steeple, it makes no prominent figure in the surrounding landscape, until closely approached. *Then*, however, you are at once convinced that it fully sustains the characteristic taste of the monks in their selection of sites, as it is embosomed amid rich lands and immediately adjoining an inlet of Lough Carra, while somewhat more distant are visible the remains of Castle Carra, with the picturesque ruins of the small abbey of Burriscarra and the little island church.

A portion of the nave still retains its stone roofing. Here, among the few places in Ireland still consecrated to the purpose of their original construction, mass continues to this day to be celebrated; and the central arches remain quite perfect and are of striking boldness and extent of span, springing from beautifully tapering and richly ornamented shafts with their grotesque faces, so that the re-roofing of them would be still quite practicable. Indeed it has been often contemplated; and, doubtless, apart from all religious consideration, such attempt to renovate one of the finest of our monuments of antiquity would be hailed with delight by every Irishman of taste.

The eastern or grand window is also finely finished; and in the small chapel, interior to the grand altar, is a beautifully chiselled altarpiece, surmounted by three exquisitely carved cherubs, still in

complete preservation; while beneath are extended, in separate compartments, the figures of the twelve apostles, now in a mutilated state, through the wanton barbarity of a party of the carbineers, who, on their disgraceful retreat before the French, at the battle of Castlebar in 1798, having ventured to halt at the abbey, lodged in the unoffending stone the bullets they had not had the courage to discharge at their bold attackers.

Beneath this private chapel is the vault of the ancient family of the earls of Mayo; but there is no external monument of stone, bearing a high date, though there is a luxuriant mantle of ivy, with its thickly matted roots—such as we have seldom seen elsewhere—to tell of many a long departed year. In this vault were also deposited the remains of Frank's mother, who was a member of the Bourke family, and whose interment was the occasion of his last visit to the abbey, shortly previous to his leaving the country.

On the slab covering its entrance Frank now knelt, shedding tears as fast as raindrops, as he recalled the death-bed of the beloved being that slept below, unconscious of his approach, and called to mind, with vehement regret, all the anxieties and cares he had cost her.

Time is, indeed, "the beautifier of the dead." O, when visiting the grave of a parent—when the beloved lineaments—the eyes beaming affection on us alone of all the world—the mutual endearments, and the innocence, and the happiness of early days rise vividly before us in the glass of memory—when the well-remembered tones come distinctly to the ear, more dear than the music of all the voices life can

now supply to us, what a flood of tenderness rushes on the heart! How we wish the grave would give up its dead, that the past might be lived over again! With what keen regret do the best of us recall the frowardness and petulance of youth, and how infinitely deeper a shade is on the follies and errors that pained those we now so deeply mourn, and who are now, alas! insensible to our affection or regret. How vividly we remember, at such moment the prophetic warnings of affection or reproof, and how fondly and confidently think that if we had the utterers again in life they should never more receive from us aught but limitless obedience, and love the most unbounded!

Such are the thoughts common to our nature. Such thoughts were strongly stirring Frank's mind as he knelt; and there was an added bitterness in the recollection that his wild impetuosity, and thoughtless acts in troubled times, had, in all likelihood, made still darker the closing days of his latest parent.

"Yes, my own beloved mother," he exclaimed vehemently, after a brief but fervent orison for her soul's repose, "that art now a saint in heaven, keenly, bitterly, do I *now* feel the truth of your words, when you warned me that few years would pass until I should find your neglected admonitions weigh like lead on my heart. Thank God—thank God, you were spared from witnessing what your unfortunate son has sunk to. But," he continued with fiercer vehemence, and starting from his knees, "by the blessed bones around me, those that shortened your days, and drove me to what I am, shall not always——"

"That's the way to talk, my darlin' Masther Frank," said a voice behind; and in the next instant he was in the embrace of Fergus Cormac, his old tutor's son, a young man about his own years and stature, but darker and fiercer of feature. This was their first meeting since Frank had gone to sea, and cordial was now their greeting, and numerous and eager their mutual inquiries.

"The last three years have changed us both greatly, Fergus," observed Frank, gazing at the strongly knit frame, and swarthy and passion-marked features of the man he had left a mere stripling.

"You may say that, Masther Frank. Your hand, that was as soft as a lady's, is now a'most as hard as my own, an' your face, barrin' where the red is, is as brown as a berry—though I was in the abbey whin you kem in, I didn't know you at wanst; an' faith I b'lieve we're changed every way too. You're become, Masther Frank, a—a smuggler."

"A free trader, Fergus; and you're at the head of a band of rapparees, I learn."

"I have, sure enough, a lock o' the boys undher me," said Fergus in a lower tone, and glancing through the window into the sunlit fields, and through the doorway into the abbey's chancel; "an' it was to meet two or three o' them at a funeral I vintured here to-day, not dhramin' I should have the blessed luck to find yoursel', Masther Frank, that I thought was still in foreign parts, jist for all the world as if you fell out o' the sky to me."

"I fear we both have been dhruiven among the breakers," said Frank, "but I have often imagined that you would probably never have steered such a course were it not for the persecution you suffered

for striking on my side the day of the scuffle with Ffolliot and his people."

"An' wasn't id my part to lose my life for any wan that had a dhrop o' the Lynch blood in him—barrin' wan" (he frowned fiercely), "not to say the mas-ther's own nephew, an' the best loved an' liked o' the name."

"Well, Fergus, and when did you see my poor dear uncle and cousin—and how do they weather their stormy trials, and has my cousin Bob behaved as rascally as report states?"

"It's a black day, Masther Frank, that I have to say the bad word o' wan o' the Lynchs," replied Fergus, slowly and with contracted brow, "but Masther Robert—Sir Robert he's now made himsel'—is a disgracee to the name. O, he's an onnathrel villian. Why it was only last Whitsuntide that he kem with that hard-hearted ould skinflint, Ffolliot, an' a party o' Sir John's throopers, till they took possession, an' put his own father an' his own sisther, Miss Ellen, out o' house and home, all bekase he bekem what *they* call a conformist, but what my father calls a Judas, while the ould masther an' Miss Ellen wouldn't, in course, change from the religion that belonged to their ancesthors."

"And did he really bring troops to eject them?" asked Frank, his accents trembling with passion.

"Sure enough he did, the villian, Masther Frank; an' they'd have to shelter themselves in a cabin, an' glad to get id, barrin that the good-hearted Prodestan clargyman gev thim the use o' the purty cottage at the lake beyant, that, you remimber, his brother Alick used sometimes to have for a fishin' lodge, an' there they're still. Mr. Gordon, in spite o' Sir John and

Ffolliot, often visits them, though not to alther their religion, an' sinds thim many a present—an' it'll stand to him yit, maybe, whin others 'll meet a fall. The ould masther's heart is broke, they say, since he was turned out by his own son; an' Miss Ellen is taken up night and day nursin' him. As to Masther—Sir Robert—he's livin' like a rale divle, dhrinkin' an' gamblin' an' makin' game ov his father's scruples o' conscience; an' ever more in with Sir John and Ffolliot, an' goin' to church whin he's sober. O, only that I wouldn't have a hand in the blood ov any Lynch, I could murdher him with my own hand; an' sometimes I'm hard set to ——"

The conversation was interrupted by the wild funeral lament, which broke fearfully on the silent loneliness of the scene, as the procession, alluded to by Fergus, was visible approaching the abbey; and as Frank wished to avoid observation, with another cordial grasp of the hand, he was moving off when his wild companion, laying hand on his shoulder, said, in a whispered tone, "Masther Frank, we cant be doin' much these times, from Sir John and his throopers, barrin ov an odd time. Still if you remain it'll go hard if we dont all have revinge soon an' sudden."

"Well, Fergus, I'm not, at any rate, going to hoist sail at once, and we'll talk over this again," said Frank; and quitting the abbey to proceed to the cottage, he left his wild acquaintance to await the burial procession. The angle of the lake, hard by which the cottage stood, was *then* skirted with thick woods which, on the day in question, wore all those exquisite but mournful autumnal hues so dear to the painter's eye, but speaking, amid all their beauty, of

fast approaching decay and death. The air was breathlessly still and the lake glanced bluey and tranquilly between the thin foliage, as Frank passed along the well-remembered wood paths, while the yellow leaves rustled slowly before him in the tender sunshine, as if reluctant to quit for ever the boughs they had so long adorned, and the woodland choristers were pouring forth what might seem to be a parting hymn for decaying nature. Altogether so strong was the melancholy charm of the scene that, long ere he had got clear of the wood at the unequal pace he was pursuing, it had completely sobered down his late excitement. Unequal, indeed, were his movements. Sometimes he moved slowly; and more than once he paused and leant against a tree, overcome by shadowy and undefined fears respecting the state in which he should find his beloved relatives. Would he not find his uncle sinking rapidly, like nature, into dissolution—or might not the spirit have already flown? Then, under the impulse of this thought, he hurried onward for a space, as if life and death were on every step.

Through those desultory movements, twilight had gathered over the scene by the time he reached the cottage. He paused a moment at the low garden wall, to ascertain if he might, from appearances, the position of the inmates; and while he stood, a man shot through the little wicket, and passed rapidly by him. He had barely obtained a single glance at the passer, but that glance, imperfect as it was in the fading twilight, induced him to think he recognised the person of Cornet Ffolliot, the son of *his* old enemy; and almost involuntarily he clutched his weapon. The person, however, whoever he was—

be, was out of sight in an instant, and all thought of him was forgotten for the time. The next moment Frank had sprung over the low paling, and was approaching the small opened window, at which still sat his cousin Ellen, with her arm supporting her cheek, as if in mournful meditation.

A slight scream—the door opened, and, with an exclamation of delighted recognition, she was folded in his arms, and speechless.

“And my dear uncle—*how—where* is *he*, Ellen?” asked Frank rapidly, when they had both recovered their speech.

“Speak low, dear Frank, he is slumbering. But come this way, and you will see the wreck that sorrow and persecution have made.” She led him noiselessly in; and, opening a door softly, pointed to a sofa, on which Frank could distinguish by the firelight within the wasted form and haggard features of her father—how sadly altered from the stately figure and fine countenance for which Sir Edmund had been remarkable! “He is frequently slumbering now, Frank,” she continued, “and I’m almost glad of it, because when he’s awake he sometimes talks so, that I’m beginning to fear—greatly—that misfortune has turned—that—that my darling father’s mind is gone entirely”—the last words were half choked by her tears.

“And Robert—the renegade—good God, that he should be your brother, Ellen—knows all this, and feels no compunction, I understand.”

“Name him not, dear Frank; his acts are monstrous, so out of nature, they can scarcely be his own. He must have been compelled to them by some evil spirit, to whom he is subject. He offered

me an asylum when we were—*expelled* the hall ; but I would as soon have linked myself to the arch-enemy, as accepted his offer—may I be forgiven for speaking so of a brother, however vile !”

“ You would have more need of forgiveness, Ellen, if you spoke or felt otherwise,” said Frank, fiercely ; “ but were he your brother and my cousin ten times over he shall both hear my abhorrence and feel my vengeance.” The loud and eager tones startled the slumberer, and he recognised them at once. Starting to a sitting posture, he exclaimed in feeble accents, “ I dreamt I heard my boy Frank’s voice.”

“ My dear father, it is no dream—thank God and the Virgin, you are right,” said Ellen fervently, as she sprang forward to the sofa, leading with her Frank, who, dropping on his knee and seizing Sir Edmund’s wasted hand between his own, exclaimed, “ yes, dear uncle, ’tis myself at last.”

“ And why did you stay so long ?” said Sir Edmund, as he gazed intently into his nephew’s face ; and the next instant his own resumed the painful expression of mental imbecility, and an uncertain and wavering light gleamed from his eyes, as leaning back he uttered a faint laugh, and muttered at broken intervals, and in weak tones, “ I knew all along he would be in time for the hunt, and a glorious run we’ll have, the day is so favourable. Peter, saddle Jacobus for me—hush ! (sinking his voice to an indistinct whisper) Nassau, I believe, I should call him these times. No matter : let Mr. Frank ride his old favourite, Tempest, and lead out the chesnut—no, the piebald pony for Miss Lynch, and do you keep close to her—and hark you, Peter, tell the steward we must defer that business he was speaking of till to-morrow. Thi-

day must be all for pleasure. Hark, forward, boys—tally-ho—tally-ho—ho, ho, ho.” The last words he uttered with energy, and the exertion overpowered him. He leant back silent through exhaustion, while the cousins looked from him to each other in melancholy speechlessness, the scalding tears falling nearly as fast from Frank as from Ellen.

After a moment’s pause, Sir Edward resumed with a start, “ha! Ellen, my love, tell your unfortunate brother, Rob—Robert, that I’m not within. Your mother whispered me last night that he was dangerous”—he put his mouth to her ear—“when he had wine in—ha! there he is. Draw the curtain, my love.”

“My own, own dearest father, it’s your nephew, your favourite Frank, that’s returned to bring hope and comfort to us all,” she said, in a voice almost inarticulate with emotion.

“He will force himself—will he?” continued her father, unconscious or heedless of her words. “Let him come, then, and do you, love, stand from between us”—insanity lent an unnatural fire to his eye, and strength to his voice—“he has apostatized from the faith of his fathers. He has sent to a premature grave, the dearest and fondest of mothers. Let him come, then, and receive a father’s heart wrung mal.—ha! my beloved Julia (the voice sank gradually) are you here from among the blest, to plead for him? Then I will not curse him. But Julia, O my love, ask me not, with that voice and that look, ‘I never before refused, to bless him. I cannot, can—not—*bless* him.’”

Towards the conclusion of this heart-touchinghapsody his voice had been gradually failing; but

so powerfully was he wrought upon by the imaginary scene, that he uttered the last words with gasping energy, and, after their utterance, fell back completely exhausted, his agonized auditors remaining by him in silence, broken only by an occasional bursting sob from Ellen, till an unquiet slumber gave a partial respite to the sufferings of mind and body.

CHAPTER IV.

THE only domestic in the cottage was Katty K'vlin, the old housekeeper, who had lived the better part of half a century in the family. Katty was one of those persons, so often met with, who possess a good heart with a bitter tongue. She seldom did anything without first expressing an intention to do the very reverse—was constantly grumbling to herself or to others about real or imaginary grievances, and was ever ready to give her advice in public or in private, as well respecting what did not concern her as what did, and, in general, as richly seasoned with proverbs as ever was the far-famed governor of Barrataria's own. But Sir Edmund and his daughter had been long accustomed to her habits; and her peculiarities were overlooked or forgiven in consideration of her attachment and truthfulness.

Frank was a late riser the morning after his arrival at the cottage. He was barely dressed when Katty entered his room, to inform him from her mistress that Sir Edmund was now perfectly collected and anxious to see him.

"O, Masther Frank," continued the old woman,

"a black change has come over the family even since you saw them before. But 'as they brewed they must bake,' an' 'the bed they med they must lie on.' Of'en an' of'en I tould th' ould masther an' misthress (the heavens be her bed this day) that it was 'spare the rod an' spile - the child,' when they'd be humourin' all the frolics an' wickedness o' that divle's darlin', Masther Robert. But what would they care about what an ould woman ud say, though my words kem in thrue afther all."

"Well, Katty, you know the proverb, that 'when things come to the worst they'll mend,' " said Frank smiling, "and the wind may soon change, you know."

"No, no, Masther Frank, the curse o' Crummell's come over us entirely. 'It never rains but it powers', an' I'm afeard every day that goes over our heads, 'it'll be a day oulder, an' a day worse.' At the rate things is goin' on, the black *Sassenagh* wont allow us the blessed light o' the day at last, no more nor the mass or the funeral."

"Well, Katty, these are matters *we* cannot remedy," said Frank, anxious to change the theme, and escape from her grumbling; "but, how are our neighbours; I have not yet had time to inquire for them? How are the rector, Mr. Gordon, and his family? You will yourself allow them to be worth asking for, though *Sassenaghs*."

"They are, indeed, as different from the black breed they come from, as chalk is from cheese. What ud the poor Catholics do at all, at all, those black times, but for *them*? God give them the benefit ov all their goodness, and turn them to the thrue religion, at their dyin' day! But you know, Masther Frank, 'wan swallow makes no summer.'"

"Well, and how is our neighbour, Mr. Andrews, the founder? He, too, is not a bad Protestant, I hope."

"The ould churl is well enough in his way," said the old woman bitterly; "but what business has an ould blacksmith, from the black north, with his bel-lowses an' hammers, to be hopin' (coping) up with *gentlemin*, that spint more money in their kitchens nor all the ancesthors that ever went afore or ever 'll come afther him, was worth? Cock him up! and so I tould Sir Edmund, the day he gev him the green acres, an' allowed the blue naiger to put up his forge. But, to be sure, I was only a dotin' ould hag, an' I had my pains for my thanks."

"And how is—his pretty daughter—Bessy, is'nt it?"

"An' do you call *her* purty, Masther Frank, with her big, red face and blue eyes, like an allyblasther doll; an' her hair a'most as white as a *dholbaun's* (a white-haired person with weak sight) an' her laughin' to hersel' ever an' always, like an' *ownshogh* (a female idiot), an' her a'most as round in the waist, as Polly Simmons, the midwife. For sartin there's nothin' in life ginteel about her; and she is'nt a patch on the mourneen, Miss Ellen, with her grand figure, jist for all the world the motto-o' the masther's, an' her eyes an' hair as black as a sloe, like her mother's—God be good to to her sowl, this day! But comparisons is odious."

"If you were a painter, Katty," said Frank, with a smile, as he moved towards his uncle's room, "you would be no flatterer of her's it seems, though I thought Bessy was a favourite of yours."

"An' why should one ov her father's breed be a

favourite with me, or *you* aither, Masther Frank ?” asked the old woman energetically, staying him at the same time by placing a hand on his shoulder, and looking earnestly into his face—“ Any how, they say she’s pulling a cord with a fat sergeant-major o’ Sir John’s throopers ; an’ the fittest he’s for her, to be sure, ‘ as birds of a feather *should* flock together.’ ”

“ Bessy. Andrews !—a serjeant !” said Frank, with a slight start ; “ you must be doting now surely, Katty.”

“ No, Masther Frank, I’m neither dotin’ nor dhrunk, an’ I only say what I could hear. But I see now as plain as the nose on my face, that I hard the thruth, whin they tould that you yoursel’ wor casting an eye at the minx. *You*, that ev’ry wan that went afore you, from Ginesis to Revelation, was gintlemin born, to stoop to look at a smith’s daughter ! Surely, the Lynches isn’t fallen so low as that yit, black as the times is ; an’ remimber, I tell you, it’s ill sortin’ betune the hawk and the crow, an’ the dead ud rise out o’ their graves to forbid a match betune a Lynch, and a tinker’s spawn. No, no, let them match among themsels.”

“ Katty, this is downright nonsense. You are rambling away, without knowing what you say, and I have humoured you too long by listening to you.” He broke away from her detaining arm, leaving her to pursue her grumbling strain.

“ Yis, to be sure,” she continued, “ I’m an ould dotard now an’ should’nt be humoured. But ‘ the longest day ’ill have an end ;’ and my words may come to pass, as they of’n did afore”—a bell rang to summon her to her young lady—“ to be sure, to be sure, it’s no lie that there’s no rest for the wicked.

It's Katty here, and Katty there, as if we had wings to fly. An' Masther Frank, too, to be callin' us a dotard, an' houldin' up for a beauty, that little painted doll, Bessy Andrews! But my words'll come in thrue yit, and *thin* he'll repint. 'It's a long lane that has no turn'—*nabachlish*—ay, ring away, but you must wait for me, for all that," she concluded as she hobbled away at last.

Sir Edmund was perfectly calm and lucid when his nephew now entered his room; but he looked more worn and emaciated, than even on the preceding evening. He motioned his nephew to a seat by the bed-side, and taking his hand, said, in a weak tone, "Frank, my poor boy, your welcome has been a sad one; but we're fallen on evil days, and I fear joy and hope have deserted our country, as well as *our* house in particular, for an indefinite period, if not for ever. You have come, however, in time to see me laid with our fathers, and I have become so selfish, as frequently to wish for that of late."

"I trust in God, sir, those squalls will blow over, and that you will live to see some happy years still."

"Look at these, Frank," rejoined Sir Edmund, a faint smile overspreading for an instant his ghastly features, as he stretched forth his wasted arm, and long, attenuated fingers; "and, remembering what they were, can you speak of recovery to me? Besides, I fear, that things are not always right here,"—he touched his forehead—"as I sometimes feel as if I was just awaking from some frightful dream, so that the speedy dissolution of which those wasted limbs are the sure indicators would be a release to be thankful for, in my present circumstances, were it not for my darling"—he looked cautiously around,

as he said in a still lower tone, "Ellen is not in the room, Frank?"

"No, sir, she is in the parlour, arranging breakfast."

"Then I will speak out freely, perhaps for the last time. For poor Ellen, there will, I trust, be something forthcoming still, notwithstanding the conduct of my—her unfortunate brother, whose heart was not originally so bad—"

"O sir, he's a monster the earth should groan under the pressure of," interrupted Frank, eagerly.

"Feelings so strong are natural at your age; but you must repress them, my dear boy. Ellen has told me, too, that you threatened vengeance on—Robert; but there must be no thought of vengeance, Frank. Redress belongs to heaven, which, in its own good time, will, I fervently trust, through the intercession of the Virgin and the saints, touch the unfortunate apostate's heart with contrition, and lead him back to the right path. Promise me then, Frank, on my death bed, for such I feel it to be, by your hope of heaven, that you will never raise a hand in hostility, nor abet another to raise it, against your cousin, guilty as he may be." Frank hesitated, and his uncle added with more earnestness, "Frank, if you would smooth the pillow of a dying man, whose last thought will be for your happiness, next to that of his daughter, and who has suffered beyond the ordinary lot of humanity, you will comply with my last request."

Thus adjured, Frank could not resist the appeal, and solemnly gave the required pledge.

"God bless you for ever, my boy," ejaculated the dying man with fervour; "and now I would say a

few words about yourself. I have heard some reports of your leading a loose life, this time past. But I trust, even if true, that you will henceforth forsake it, and watch over and protect your—orphan cousin, as far as a Catholic can. The good rector will arrange and secure whatever little property may remain to her—may he be rewarded above for all his kindness! —I am getting weak, Frank, and it is growing dark. O, if I had a confessor, for a few minutes even, before the total darkness comes!”

The eyes were closed ere he had concluded, and the invalid sank gradually into slumber, with Frank's hand still clasped in his. Withdrawing it gently, Frank now joined Ellen in the parlour, and during the breakfast a long and exciting conversation ensued, in the course of which he mentioned his surprise at seeing, the preceding evening, a young person he supposed to be Arthur Ffoliot, as if issuing from the house. A rich flush suffused his cousin's pale features, as she replied hesitatingly, “O, yes, Arthur sometimes comes to ask for—my father, as he has none of the family—enmity towards us.”

During the progress of the day Sir Edmund continued to sink rapidly, his mind occasionally rambling, and occasionally lucid, so that it was quite evident he was hastening fast to his eternal rest. During its progress, too, he frequently repeated his longing aspirations for a priest, for however brief a space, before his dissolution; and it greatly sharpened the bitterness of Ellen, for the approaching end of her last parent, the apparent impossibility of complying with a dying request, the gratification of which is always so dear an object with her affectionate countrymen.

"There it's now—that's the way always," observed Katty, "when we used to have the priests, we thought little about them, sometimes, God forgive us! But now, whin they can't be got, we can't live or die without them. Couldn't you, Miss Ellen asthore, or Masther Frank, say the five decketts (decades) for the masther's sowl, that'll surely go to heaven ov idsel!"

"Katty, you are distressing Miss Lynch, and talking nonsense," said Frank, sharply.

"To be sure I'm an ould colliagh; an' what else could I talk but nonsense?—nonsense *inagh*." The old woman walked away in high dudgeon; and, shortly after, Frank set out for the habitation of his old instructor, Ned Cormac, the father of Fergus, the rapparee leader, after having told his cousin, that he had some expectation of meeting Father Bernard there, even though it was a day earlier than the priest had arranged to be in that district.

CHAPTER V.

THE cabin, in which the proscribed instructor of youth resided, was situated on the edge of an extensive heath, stretching away to the Partree mountains, and hard-by a deep, dark stream. The sun had been declining some hours, when Frank reached the humble domicile; but there was still considerable heat in his beams, and the old man was basking himself on a turf seat in front of the cabin, with a red night-cap on his head, and "spectacle on nose," he pored over a greasy and well-thumbed manu-

script, after having stealthily dismissed his ragged and proscribed pupils to their widely scattered homes, from what he humorously termed his "hive of learning"—namely, a sheltered nook, hard-by a bend of the river between two craggy hills, at some distance from the cabin, where the more grown boys, stretched at their length on the heath, or with large stones for desks, learned to soil paper with misshapen letters, or crooked lines intended to represent figures; and the juniors, on the sound of a strange footstep, became silent as mutes, in total opposition to the system pursued in more modern hedge-schools, where the urchins were wont, on the approach of a stranger, to dash into a loud and general clatter of rehearsal, by way of exhibiting their attention to learning. For, at the dreary period we are treating of, a heavy penalty was the award to any Roman Catholic who was detected in giving instructions, and the consequence was, of course, that ignorance and crime overspread the length and breadth of the land in rank and deadly luxuriance.

Ned was intently engaged over his manuscript, occasionally rubbing his cap with a puzzled air; and Frank paused to observe his fantastic and curiously mingled garb. His nether habiliments consisted of clay-coloured brogues, rusty silk stockings, and well patched black breeches, with *shining* knee buckles. His vest was a faded brocade, reaching below his hips, and his coat, more than half-threadbare, was of fine black cloth, except the sleeves, which were of blue frieze that had been inserted instead of the original ones, either for durability or of necessity. A red flannel night-cap surmounted this motley dress, at which the old man cast an occasional glance, with

no little complacency. After having observed him for a few moments, Frank, advancing still unperceived, slapped his quondam tutor on the shoulder, exclaiming, "hallo, my old boy, still over the books and papers, I see." The old man stared—started up—rubbed his spectacles, and stared again, muttering to himself "Yis—no—surely it can't be himself in airnest. Yet it's *so* like him! It must be his fetch. Ochone, Masther Frank, are ye real flesh an' blood, or only a shadow?"

"Real flesh an' blood, my old cock," responded Frank, with a hearty shake of the hand, which was enthusiastically returned; "and how has the world gone with you since I hoisted sail?"

"Hubaboo, murther in airnest!" shouted the old man, as he jumped about with the agility of boyhood, now perfectly assured of the reality of his visitor. "Masther Frank himself! Let me look at you—phoo, what a beautiful lad he's turned out—the little gossoon that was, the other day, only in his Cæsar an' rule of three. An' to think ov his bein' in forin parts, an' they say a great sailor too. I suppose Eneas, himself, in all his wanderins, couldn't come near you. What a power o' grand sights you must have seen abroad, Masther Frank! The true religion is, in course, in great splindhor abroad; an' I suppose you wint to see the Pope an' St. Pether's. I hear they're rale grand sights."

"Our canvas did not reach quite so far, Ned. But another time I must give you the whole history of my voyages. At present you must tell me how the land lies here."

"Ou, bad, bad, bad entirely for *us*. Nothing but rin', an' imprisonin', an' thransportin', if we don't

become vagabon' turncoats, like Masther Robert—I beg your pardon, Masther Frank."

"And do you still venture to instruct?"

"Why, what would the creatures do at all without a cast o' my office, if it was only to teach them their Christian docthrine, an' the sarvin' o' mass? an' they already without priests an' without chapels. Yis, Master Frank, as long as I'm left alive an' out o' jail, I'll thry to give them a mouthful o' the larnin' the poor gossoons are so fond ov; though to tell the truth, they don't deserve it so well from me at present, as the lower part of the parish is, this minnit, encouragin' Dan Heraghty, as a hedge-masther, that was only a scholar o' my own, an' as stupid as a jackass, though he's now gettin' twice as many dinners as myself, an' three times as much meal an' potatoes. A spalpeen that hardly knows a case from a tense—couldn't tell whether Cæsar was a Roman or a Milesian general, and scarcely knows a square from a circle. Often I had to cry to him—

'Hard is the task to wash an Ethiop white,
To polish dunces—make a blockhead bright.'

"I'd bet all I'm worth this minnit (no heavy bet the reader may guess) the spalpeen couldn't consther the verb 'Lavo,' or tell why a figure is skipt in every line o' multiplication. He a masther *inagh*."

Laughing at this outburst of jealousy, Frank observed, "I need not ask respecting Fergus, as I met him yesterday."

"Did you, though? I'm afeard he's takin' to wild courses lattherly (sinking his voice) though he was a'most a dutiful a boy as the pious Eneas himself.

an' nathrally ov a good disposition, barrin' that he didn't take to the larnin', an' I could never get him beyond the conjugations, or out of fractions. Any way he was cruelly persecuted since you went abroad, Masther Frank, an' particularly since he gave the father ov a lickin', more power to his arm, to that upstart Dan Heraghty, that you may remimber has a large faction in the parish, because he couldn't put up with some disparagement the spalpeen was puttin' on me. But with the blessin' o' God, the poor fellow 'll come on the right path again, through the intercession o' the Virgin an' the saints, that, bad as he is, he never turned his back to yit. But I'm talkin' too much o' myself an' mine, an' to *you*, God help me, whin I ought to remimber what misfortune has come over my betthers. How is Sir Edmund—that was—weatherin' it out—the jolly and the good hearted? I didn't see him for the last month."

"He is driving fast to his eternal harbour, and it's as much owing to his illness, as to my wish to see yourself, that I came here to-day, as I thought I might hear something of Father Kilger, who landed with me two days ago—you haven't heard of, or from him?"

"That's the first time I heard his name mintioned this many a long day; an' did the darling vincture back to his own ould parish, in spite o' the two Shawns? Faith, thin, maybe he wont be as welcome as the flowers o' May, or ——" he was interrupted by a low, sweet voice calling from the opposite side of the cabin, "Ned, old Ned, are you there?"

The tones thrilled with electrical influence through

Frank. His frame trembled, and his agitation became visible, even to the dim eyes of his companion.

"Don't be alarmed, Mr. Frank," observed the latter, "I'm coming, my jewel—it's only my little rosebud, Elizabeth Andrews, that sometimes gets an odd lesson from me, to improve her language and knowledge of accounts. You remimber Miss Elizabeth—I'm with you in a jiffy, a *hagur* (my love)—though she doesn't remimber you, with your foreign look, and unvernacular accent. But I can intrhroduce you in a minnit. 'Twas hersel' that gave me the most o' these fine raiments, that I call my Irish *togas*"—he glanced proudly over his motley habiliments.

"Not a word of my name on any account, Ned, or I will instantly hoist sail. The young lady must remember—I remember her—that is, we shall be very well acquainted."

"Very well, Masther Frank—here is the blooming flower hersel'." Pulling off his head gear, Ned sprang forward, with a grace all his own, to assist over a hedge adjoining the cabin, a blooming girl, radiant with health and exercise. Bessy Andrews was Hebe-like in person, with rich brown tresses, flowing in careless luxuriance over a neck and shoulders of beautiful proportions and ivory fairness, as far as they were visible, while large eyes, liquid as ocean's depths and darkly blue, mated well with features of much archness as well as with the rich rose-hues of her dimpled cheeks—richer still from her recent walk.

"You must have been deeply engaged, Ned—perhaps writing love verses," said the lively gi-

springing lightly from the hedge, "as I have called two or three times without your minding me"—then perceiving Frank, she drew back a pace, blushing deeply. But observing him sharply for a moment, an archer smile overspread her features, as she returned Frank's bow with a distant curtesy.

"This is an ould pu—an ould friend I mean, just returned from foreign parts, an' talkin' to me ov ould times, Miss Bessy," said Ned, "an' that's my apology for delayin' my purty rosebud."

"And has Miss Andrews no friend in other lands she would care to inquire for?" asked Frank, after a few ordinary remarks had been made on both sides, and they had refused Ned's invitation, to go in and rest themselves in the cabin, the appearance of which, truth to say, offered but little inducement to exchange the pure, sweet air abroad, for its smoky atmosphere.

"O, 'tis as much as *I* can ever do, to remember my friends while they are before my eyes, and sometimes, I fear, even more than I do," she said, without appearing in the least surprised at the knowledge of her name, displayed by a stranger, as she affected to consider Frank.

"No brother, cousin, or other valued friend, in whom she feels any peculiar interest?"

"Yes, now I think of it, there is a wild cousin of mine, Benjamin, that went to America, because he was tired of home, and home of him. But I never inquire after him, because I never expect to hear any good of him. And then there's my old granduncle Bennet, that has been a nabob for the last forty years. *He* might be worth inquiring for, as he could, perhaps, send us diamonds or pearls. But it's likely,

you have not journeyed so far as his residence, or, even if you have, that, as a stranger, you heard not of him.

"Arra, tundher an nounthers, never mind him, Miss Bessy," said Ned; "who is he at all——"

"I have not, indeed, been so far from home," said Frank, interrupting Ned with a significant frown. "My sailing has but extended to the European shores—and is there not in that wide space one Miss Andrews would ask for?"

"I scarcely think there is, as far as remembrance serves me at this moment," she rejoined. "Besides, the absent seldom allow us to hear any good of them; and it's so much pleasanter to amuse ourselves with those that are present, and whose attractions are before our eyes, than to waste the hours in useless regrets for those that are away, and may never return. But I'm running on too freely."

"O, there's nothing like openness," responded Frank. "Complete the admission now, by stating, that at present, you have no thought or memory for any one, not decorated with sword and helmet."

"A rather curious proposal certainly, to one who admits no farther confessor, and only to be tolerated from a person introduced as the friends of my old acquaintance, Ned."

"An', if the thruth was known, Miss Bessy, sure he's as grate a friend——"

Another frown cut Ned short again; and Bessy, affecting not to perceive this bye-play, continued: "Well, as I have listened to the question, I will answer it openly. I do like the society of the military, as I think them the gayest; and, I believe, most of my countrywomen have the same fee"

towards them. You are *not* military, I should imagine."

"No, an unfortunate papist would find no access in the English army to sword and epaulettes, without which, Miss Andrews would not, of course, deign to notice him," said Frank, with some harshness.

"O, the daughter of a founder," she said laughingly, "would, in your country, be too much beneath one of those epauletted gentry, to have a thought bestowed on her; and, fortunately, I am much humbler in my notions——"

"O, Miss Bessy, don't talk that way of yourself." eagerly interrupted Ned, who liked neither the manner nor matter of the conversation. "The rosebud of Ballintubber is good enough for a colonel, if she fancied him—I didn't give you a copy yit of the lines I made for you, the last time I mounted my ould Pegasus. I wish Dan Heraghty was here to listen to them.

"Whin the sun he is brightly shinin'——"

"Another time will answer better for the recital, Ned," said Frank.

"No, no, Masther F——, sir, I mean, there's no time like the present; an' I'll lave it to the lady herself."

"Let us have the verses by all means, Ned, however unworthy the subject of such a muse as yours."

After humming twice or thrice to clear his throat, drawing up a stocking, and adjusting a dingy cravat, Ned recommenced,

"Whin the sun he is brightly shinin',
Thin our rosebud the fairest is smilin';
For it is my full and clear conviction,
Beyond all fear of contradiction,

That the goddess Venus was scarce so fair,
And did Helen of Greece but once compare
With our rosebud, in her blooming charms,
Ould Throy would have been spared from its alarms.
The Greeks would stay at home and be quiet,
Instead of kicking up so vagabond a riot;
For the Throjan boy'd scorn to rob her
From her spouse, but turn to Ballintubber—"

"Well, Ned," she said, interrupting him with a hearty laugh, "now that you've brought him to Ballintubber, I must take my leave of him till another opportunity, as I have already overstayed my time, listening to your flattering verses, which had almost made me forget that my errand was to tell you that, when you find time to come to the cottage, my father will have some employment for you, in making out accounts that have foiled me. Farewell then for the present."

"Wait, Miss Bessy, for the nixt four lines. They're the flower o' the flock, an' 'ud make Dan Heraghty hang himself if he heard them, barrin' that the spalpeen knows no more about poethry than a Spanish cow does of talkin' English. They wo'nt delay you more than a few minutes."

"I can't delay a second more at present, Ned—there's the workmen's dinner bell, and my father would be alarmed at my absence; when you come to the cottage I shall have an opportunity of hearing the remainder of your flattery."

With another curtsey to Frank, as cool and distant as the first, though the same arch smile was still on her countenance, she re-crossed the hedge, and moved along the heath with a step almost as light as that of the hare she occasionally startled in her path.

"Well then, Miss Bessy, if you must go, I must go with yourself, asking pardon of mather—this gentleman,"—we may have our suspicions as well as the reader respecting the effect the dinner bell had in producing the promptness of Ned's resolution; but it becomes us not to be scandalous in our insinuations—so saying, Ned rushed into the cabin, seized his ancient and well-worn cocked hat, and repassing Frank, whispered, as he shook his hand, "I will do more for you than you were doin' for yerself. Pho, did you think me such a gomeril as not to see all the time that you didn't lave in foreign parts an atom o' the sneakin' regard you used to have for my little rosebud? An' throth, it went agin my stomach not to tell her at wanst who she was talkin' to, though I'm sure I saw by her eye she half suspected it all the time though she said nothing. *Bannagh lath* (blessings with you), I'll have more to tell you in a day or two"—he pushed on after Miss Andrews at a pace utterly at variance with his years, and which, with his motley dress, formed a striking contrast to her appearance and motions.

"I think with him," soliloquized Frank, "that she suspected, at least, who I was, if she didn't recognize me all through. And how completely she exhibited her old jilting propensities. Pshaw! what are her propensities—or what is she herself to me at present? And yet the ease with which she talked to my face of her preference for the military, the pertness of her manner, and the provoking smile she wore throughout! More than once I had enough to do to shorten sail, and refrain from flinging back on her some of her former sentiments and opinions.

I will think no more of her now, when heavier

matters are pressing on me. How gracefully she moves, like a vessel before the breeze with all her gear on ! I am almost jealous of that odd, old simpleton, for moving so near her. Ah ! she is gone ; but I shall soon see her again, and her favourite, perhaps, too."

An eminence had shut her out from his straining gaze, and he turned him towards the abbey ; his mind, despite his recently expressed resolution, actively and effectually engaged in tracing out the striking improvement three years had made in Bessy's personal attractions, and recalling the late as well as former interviews with her.

He was nearing the precincts of the abbey, so entirely wrapt up in this subject that the approach of a person, from behind an ivied fragment, was unperceived till a hand was laid on his shoulder, and the voice of Father Bernard said, " Frank, my boy, your thoughts must have been of a deep, if not of a pleasant nature, as I have been moving parallel, and close to you, for the last few minutes without your having perceived me."

" And yet you, my dear sir, were the person of all the world I was in search of," said Frank, with a warm pressure of hands ; " though but with slight hopes of meeting you, as it is a day earlier than you calculated on arriving here."

" Yes ; I found the inmates of a cabin, in which I intended resting for a day, were from home."

Frank now informed the priest of his uncle's dying state, and his engrossing anxiety to have a confessor before his dissolution ; and it was arranged that the priest should visit the cottage a little before midnight.

"And were you enabled, Father Bernard, to steer safely here, and without trouble?" asked Frank.

"Not altogether, Frank; but let us take the field-path towards Owen Durkan's, where I purpose resting for the night, and I will detail to you my escape, as it may serve to impress on you the value of presence of mind in an emergency. The night after I parted from you," he continued, as they struck into the field-path, "I sheltered in a lone cabin; and whether I was betrayed—whether he had tracked my steps, or whether it was mere casualty, *Shawn*, in a state of complete intoxication, came to rest in that cabin about midnight. Unfortunately, too, he must have witnessed my departure at grey-dawn, as I had scarcely advanced a quarter of a mile, when I distinguished the clatter of a horse's hoofs pressing hard behind me; and, in a few minutes more, I heard the voice of the ruffian calling on me by name, with a tremendous oath, to stop, or that he would shoot me. Instead, however, of complying with his request, I redoubled my pace. But in vain. He came up with me rapidly, and, dismounting, attempted to seize me; but intemperance rendered him powerless, and, shoving him to the earth—a task which a child could *then* have easily accomplished—I made at my utmost speed for Castleard, once beyond which, my chances of escaping observation, and, consequently, of safety, would, I knew, be greatly increased. Unfortunately, however—fortunately I should rather express it—the first person I saw on entering the town, early as was the hour, was the person I most feared, and had most reason to fear, the dreaded Sir John Ingram himself. To attempt to retrace my steps would be madness; and to

diverge from the street was out of the question, as the houses were all closed, and, even if practicable, such a movement would but have prolonged the period of my danger, as Sir John, having perceived me, was advancing fast. So I took the resolution of throwing myself on his protection—a resolution certainly conceived on the spur of the occasion, but to which I was induced by more than one motive. The worst have sometimes redeeming qualities. I had heard that there was a species of wild generosity in Sir John's character that, when the chord was awakened, had induced him to shelter temporarily some that had confidently appealed to him. I had heard also, that he greatly relished the discomfiture of his villainous satellite. Accordingly, I met him boldly as he advanced towards me; and when he asked my name, and where I was going to, I answered unhesitatingly, that I was a priest, flying from Shawn na Soggarth, whom I was after having knocked down; that there was one man I was particularly afraid of, namely, Sir John, and that I trusted that *he*, as the first I had met with, and evidently a friendly gentleman, would help to save me from those I feared.

“ ‘ And you gave the rascal a sound licking—eh ! did you ? ’ he said.

“ ‘ I left him stretched on the road, certainly.’

A grim smile passed across his face, as he said, ‘ and you wish to escape Sir John and him ? ’

“ ‘ That is my most earnest wish under heaven, this moment.’

“ ‘ Then you couldn't have fallen into better hands—follow me’—the same grim smile lighted his features, as he wheeled round to be my guide.

“ I followed him through some streets, silently,

though not without suspicion, an occasional early riser eyeing me as we past, with commiseration, though without venturing to speak, till we reached a bridge about a furlong east of the town, when he stopped, and, turning full round to me said, 'you are now safe for the present. I am Sir John; but beware how you cross my path again. Mullowny will not always be drunk.'

"I was not long, you may be sure, in taking myself out of his sight; and striking into the fields at once, I reached Ballintubber without further obstacle or delay."

They had now closely approached Durkan's cabin, and, at the priest's request, Frank and he separated for a few hours, the former returning to his uncle and cousin, with the glad intelligence of Father Bernard's arrival, and his intended visit to them that night.

CHAPTER VI.

It was the market day of Castleard. The usual groups of loungers and vendors—the industrious and the idle were assembled; but by far the most remarkable in the market was Johnny M'Cann, the widely-known software pedlar, usually designated Cheap Johnny.

Johnny had, as usual, a considerable assemblage about him, to whom he was auctioneering gowns, caps, kerchiefs, &c., with his accustomed strength of lungs and profusion of words. "That's right!" he

roared—" *faug a ballagh* (clear the way). There, that's the way. Gather round me, boys and girls; there's no one else in the market worth goin' to. For every one else 'll look for profit; but I give the primest article that's made for less than it could be manufactured for. O, I'm the boy for

Tanners, weavers,
Sawyers, pavours,
Tinkers, tailors,
Soldiers, sailors,
Brewers, bakers,
Sweeps, shoemakers,

and their wives. There Molly, that is the patthern of a gown I believe.

Examine it, try it,
And if you like it buy it.

Turn it—draw it—twist it—pull it. *It* can bear inspection as well as yourself. Look at the texture as smooth as an eel's waistcoat, and the colours as clear as ——"

"Mud," put in an arch girl among the surrounding group.

"No, you rogue," said the ready salesman, "but as bright as your own roguish eyes. I wish I was a week courtin' you."

"Troth thin we'd rather have *you* for a week than for a fortnight, I'm thinking."

"I'll have no more to say to you, you little divle you—Molly, be sure to have the coat. I brought it myself all the way from the manufactory, and can sell it cheaper than it was made for. It's one of our lucky patthrens too. The last colleen that bought a

gown o' that patthren, was married and churched in it—buried her first husband—aye, faith, and was married again a second time in it, and that's what I call luck. What shall I say for the patthren, full eight yards?

Now would I beg the favor, of any linen weaver,
Or any other person, that I could make a verse on,

to say if it isn't richly worth nine shillings. I shant say nine however—eight—seven—six. I shant say six—five—four—three. Any one to bid two and six—two and three—two? I shant take less and wont say more. It's yours, Molly, and that you may be married and churched in it. Aye, Darby, that's a pair of suspindhers that 'll stretch like a roadjobber's conscience; and if your bachelor, Sally, there, gets the cap and comb. I'll be bail there 'll be cryin' eyes and broken hearts the next cake night.

Sold again and took the money,
That's the motto for cheap Johnny.

I'm the boy that 'll make the shop-keepers hang their trade and turn to broguemakin', as they were before."

"A comic knave," observed Sir John.

"But not a bit too honest, I'll be bound," rejoined the elder Ffolliot, as they passed through the market together.

"I'll soon bring Sir John to a better acquaintance with a bigger knave, or I'm mistaken," remarked Shawn, who followed in their wake, but who, after having passed by the *standing* (the title by which a pedlar's place of sale in the market is designated) wheeled round, and passed and repassed it again repeatedly, observing the person and movements

of Johnny M'Cann's assistant, whose ample and open countenance differed not more from Johnny's sharp pinched features, than did his awkwardness in handling and measuring the goods, from his principal's rapidity and adroitness. Yet, though this man spoke neither much nor loudly, Shawn perceived that the majority of the buyers seemed more inclined to make their purchases from him than from his pleasanter and more active principal; and the cause Shawn seemed to have ascertained after a few minutes' observation, as he muttered to himself, "ho, ho, I thought I smelt a rat. So he gives the sign o' the cross an' the blessin' in with the bargain. No wonder he gets good custom. Pedlin's a new thrade with him; but, misther pedlar, I'll soon aise you ov your license, or loose a fall by it."

"Hallo there, Barny, be alive, will you?" said Johnny, sharply, perceiving Shawn's eye fixed on his assistant. "You ought to be a great deal brisker, and this your second year at the business; but some people are born stupid.

Now I'm the lad,
From sweet Cloonfad,
A yard can handle,
Or thumb a bandle.*

"The piece 'll look better turned th' other way"—he stooped across to snatch the article from the attendant, whispering to him at the same moment, "Be very cautious, sir; that's the notorious Shawn na Soggarth watchin' you, and, if he suspects you, we're done for—aye that's something like the thing.

* An Irish measure used by the peasantry in selling frieze, flannel, etc.

There, sthretch it, Judy, and it'll reach from the church to the bridge. Ha, Mr. Mullowny, it's a cure for sore eyes to see you those times. But your just come in the nick o' time, as I've still remainin' another patthren o' the cravat you liked so much the last time you were a buyer."

"Take care, Masther Johnny," muttered Shawn, "that the company you're keepin' in this world doesn't sind you some day to dale in himp cravats." Aloud he said, "No, Masther Johnny, I'd sooner dale with your foreman here, that for a beginner in his thrade, has a knack ov his own for gettin' customers."

"Well, if you prefer him, he'll serve you, Mr. Mullowny—face him boldly, sir (to his assistant),—and now isn't that a beauty of a cravat? Try it round your neck, here's a small glass to show you how it becomes you——Mr. Rorke, I was just wishin' for your honour."

"Why, you hardened old sinner," observed the gauger, who had just come up, "I thought old Nick had you in grip years ago, that you might deal no more in rotten cloth and short measures."

"O, your honour hasn't the gauge for me as you have for the whiskey—that's the mourneen, Aggy—four—three—two—one and nine—one and six—one and three—one. I shant ask more, and wont take less."

"Well, you prince of cheats, I suppose the poor woman has value for about a groat, in that same kerchief."

"Why, your honour will almost provoke me not to show you the fine bunch of real gold seals you commissioned me to make out for you, and the price of which shall be to you only what they cost myself,

three guineas." He reached over a bunch of massive seals which Charley examined and poised, saying, "Well, they're mine for a guinea, and that's going rather too near to your price. I want, besides, some napkins and table cloths, which, I know you'll give me of the rottenest you have, with the longest price you can knock out for them."

"You shall have the best manufactured, and cheaper than they were made for. But the price of the seals must be two guineas at the lowest."

The napkins and table-cloths were produced, haggled for, and purchased.

"Now I suppose you can dispense with the services of your *smart* assistant here, while he brings those things to my mistress, who will pay him what's marked on this slip." Charley reached over to the pedlar a fragment of paper with his own prices pencilled on it.

"Surely, surely, your honour. But you must add another crown, at least, to the amount—well, we must only have it off you another time. Sold again and took the money. That's the way to go *deeragh* (go straight forward.)"

"Keep close, sir, when you get to my house, till I reach home, as you are observed and suspected," whispered the guager, as he concluded his directions to the assistant, who, bundle in hand, moved briskly away in the direction pointed out to him, after having flung some suspicious glances from the guager to Shawn.

During this brief colloquy, and from the time of Rorke's arrival at the *standing*, Shawn had been regarding him with looks of peculiar malignity; and when the purchases were made and the assistant

despatched with the parcel, he turned away to track the steps of the latter, with all the fierceness of a beast of prey balked for a while of its destined victim.

He did not, however, venture to attempt a capture, being well aware, as was before stated, of Charley's popularity in high quarters; and he was still further deterred by the circumstance of his having been foiled in two recent captures, the party in either case having turned out to be neither priest nor friar.

The parcel was delivered, and had been scarcely paid for by the mistress of the mansion, when Rorke himself entered by the rear door, after having clambered over some walls dividing the adjacent premises.

"Father Davy," he said, in a low voice, but emphatically, after he had seen that the outer doors, as well as the door and window of the apartment they were in, were closed. The carrier of the parcel started on hearing the name he had thought quite unknown in the town.

"You see I know you," continued Charley; "I am of the Rorkes of Castle Rorke, and of course remember you since boyhood. You acted very foolhardily in venturing, under any disguise, into the same place with that bloodhound Shawn, whose suspicions, you see, you at once roused, though I'm convinced he doesn't know you, but merely suspects you to be a priest or a friar. I suppose you came in consequence of some information of your uncle having landed on our coast."

"Well, as you know me so well, and through the family you come from, though I know you are not now—openly at least—of our creed, I will not affect any disguise with you. I am friar Bourke of Clare Galway, and I have ventured on the experiment (I

now find so hazardous) of coming here in consequence of information I received of my uncle having landed on part of your coast."

"Then you need proceed no further in this direction, as I met your uncle and Frank Lynch just after their landing, and they were both about to proceed inland. Ballintubber, I should imagine, would be your likeliest place to find, or hear of Father Bernard; and the sooner you are off this dangerous ground the better—let us see if you are watched"—the guager advanced from the rear room, into which he had led the friar, to one with a front aspect; and in an instant, with a low exclamation, beckoned the priest to the door. "You see there a sharp look out after you," he continued, pointing to the figure of Shawn moving on the opposite side of the street.

"But, my dear," whispered Mrs. Rorke, "you know your sister Bourke has had a daughter last night, and has a strong wish to have her baptized in the old way, though I argued with her on the danger it might subject her to; and might it not be the safest way for her namesake to remain at the lodge till night, when her wish might be gratified, particularly as she is in so weak a state?"

"I believe you are right, Celia, if we could get that blood-sucker beyond out of the way—here Lacky."

A shoeless familiar, with unwashed but highly comic countenance made his appearance—"here's a hog, Lacky. Treat that ruffian, Mullowny, and keep him engaged for half an hour with one of your stories. He's never proof against the temptation of whiskey."

"Och, be the powers o' Moll Kelly—axin' yer honour's pardon for the name, seein' that the Kellys

youthful readers of the present day an idea to what means their forefathers were obliged to resort, in order to offer up Sabbath worship on the rare occasions they had a priest to officiate for them—we shall give the scene as described to us by a person still living, who had it in youth from his father, one of the sufferers on the occasion.—

Myles Bourke, the proprietor of the lodge, stood in front of his house that Sabbath morning, surrounded by a considerable group; a few of them eagerly engaged in the vile game of "pitch and toss," for the profanation of the Sabbath through *which*, there was no legal infliction; the majority, too, affecting to be betters on the game, and, of course, interested lookers on.

There was jarring and disputation, and tumult beyond what the paltry game might warrant. Nor lacked there oaths and imprecations to increase the Sabbath profanation; while, during the uproar, the pretended lookers-on slid, one by one, through the open gateway, and clambered to the granary, to join in the worship offering up there.

The ceremony had little more than commenced when, to the dismay of poor Myles, who as well as his brother-in-law, was more than half suspected of having become a relapsed papist, Shawn joined the gamblers, and became at once, *apparently*, the most interested, and by far the most vociferous there, repeatedly invoking "the glory of hell" and other similarly fearful imprecations on his head.

"Mr. Mullowny," said Myles in a quiet tone, "remember it's the Sabbath day, and that you'll draw attention by this noise and blasphemy."

"You don't mind keeping the Sabbath much

yourself, Mither Bourke. I can hear you weren't seen in a church this three weeks; an' you know the fine for every Sunday you wor absint, Mither Bourke.—Were you there to-day? eh!"

"It is not church hour yet, Mr. Mullowny," said Myles, hesitatingly.

"But *your* prayers is begun, I think, Mither Bourke," said Shawn, dashing through the gateway to the granary. Instantly there was a crash heard and a fearful shout of suffering and terror; as, some of the congregation nearest to the archway having observed his approach, the dreaded name was pronounced, and an instantaneous rush was made by those behind towards the upper part of the granary where the priest was. The flooring there, however, chanced to be decayed and weakly supported, and it at once gave way, so that upwards of two hundred human beings, male and female, aged and youthful, were precipitated, in one thronged mass, nearly sixteen feet.

Terrible were the shrieks of mortal fear and agony for a few moments, till the uninjured had recovered presence of mind sufficient to enable them to assist their damaged companions, of whom there were many with bruised and broken limbs, though there was only one life lost on the spot—that of a lame and aged mendicant, who had hobbled in to hear Mass for the first time during many months.

Father Davy himself was the only person in the assemblage that had not fallen; the board on which he stood having remained firm, though the table which had served for an altar had sunk before him; and, creeping on it a few yards, he managed to reach one of the windows—tore away its wooden filling and

sprang to the ground outside, despite the warning, by gesture and word, of those gathered about the building.

He had barely reached the ground—which he had the good fortune to alight on unhurt—when he was in the grasp of Shawn, who had remained without to watch *his* movements especially. Father Davy was, however, himself a man of powerful frame, to which mortal terror lent, at that moment, more than giant strength, on finding himself in the dreaded clutches of the notorious priest hunter; and, by a powerful effort, he shook himself free from Shawn, and in the same moment struck him in the ear with clenched hand, and with such tremendous force, that he fell like a butchered animal on the rugged pavement, the blood gushing plentifully from his nose and mouth. And there he lay in utter insensibility for some moments, amid the jeers and laughter of the spectators, not one of whom would approach to give him the slightest assistance, while the priest made a rapid clearance over wall and hedge towards the river in rearward, on which was a boat with a stout rower, placed there to provide for such an emergency.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE were three persons assembled, on the Sabbath day we have treated of, in what was termed the library of Ingram Castle, a dim-lighted room with oak panellings and compartments, and which con-

tained some hundreds of volumes seldom or never opened, with the exception of some of the recent statute books. The principal person of the trio was the redoubted Sir John Ingram himself; a tall, swarthy man of middle age, and with features of peculiar sternness. The next in standing was Arthur Ffolliot, senior, who possessed no distinctive marks of personal character beyond a floridness of complexion and a rotundity of paunch that *did* speak strongly of fleshly indulgence, and an eternal smile that *ought* to have told of everything but "a mind at peace with all below." The third was Attorney Baker, a man too well known to the ill-fated Catholic gentry in his neighbourhood, with a small, inflamed, ferret-like eye, and cheek as fleshless and colourless as his own parchments. And, Sabbath-day as it was, the latter was seated at a table, spectaclled and deeply engaged in examining a number of papers and statute books, piled before him, as it was only the evening before he had returned from Dublin, after a protracted sojourn there, while Sir John walked to and fro the room with some marks of impatience, and Ffolliot looked occasionally at his watch, occasionally from the lawyer to Sir John, and occasionally at a paper he held in his hand.

"I am now confident, Sir John," said Baker, taking off his spectacles and rubbing his hands with glee, "that we have a clear case against the M'Donnell property, Arduff, as I have this moment in my hands quite sufficient proof that Alexander *Keeogh* (the blind) was a relapsed papist, and, of course, incompetent to make any settlement, so that, though his nephew is, or affects to be, a Protestant, his title can be readily set aside, coming from one incapaci-

tated by act of parliament—I will not trouble you with the act—to confer such title.”

“So far you have done well, Baker,” observed Sir John, with a stern smile, “as that stripe of Arduff which runs in between my two quarters at the sea, has been a complete eye-sore, and the sooner you take steps to attach it once more to the property nature intended it to belong to, the better. But what of M’William Eighter particularly?”

“It’s *my* decided opinion,” said Baker, in a measured and important tone (we divest the reply of its technicalities) “that, as far as Sir Ulick Bourke’s property is concerned, there is clearly no title in him. In fact, in my judgment, it is a *point blank* forfeited one, of which a discovery was made about thirty years ago; and though I know a large sum was paid to the government, with many others under the same circumstances, to ward off the effects of this discovery, as you are aware of, Sir John, yet, as the new grants have never since, to my knowledge, been perfected, the want of title must be—that is—I think it must be still fatal. But as this is a matter of high importance, I should like to have some opinion beside my own.”

“No, by heaven!” exclaimed Sir John, striking the table energetically, “we shall seek no better authority than your own. We have other serious charges against Bourke (or M’William as he chooses to call himself), who has dared to give us opposition on more than one occasion; and we will crush him—ay, crush him root and branch.”

“Very well, Sir John, I shall commence the proceedings at once; and I think we could include Madden’s little adjoining property, which is, I believe, in the same predicament.”

"Oh, damn the fellow, never mind him at present. His property is too insignificant, and he hasn't the spirit to give provocation."

"You're right, Sir John; his little patch is but what the savages here would call a *fodeen*," said Baker, the thought occurring readily to him that, as the patch was beneath Sir John's notice, it would suit very well for an attorney to make a discovery against in his own favour. "Then," continued he, "as for Sir Robert, conformist, as he has become"——a look of peculiar meaning from Ffoliot, who flung down the paper he had held with a start, on hearing the name, arrested the half-formed words he was about to utter, and without a second's hesitation he resumed, utterly reversing the words, and the import of what he had intended to express—"that circumstance in itself will oblige us to be more cautious, so that we must exercise patience till we have laid our hands on additional proof, or till the young reprobate shall have committed some overt act, which will lay him entirely prostrate before us."

"Oh, give him as much line as you please: there can be little fear of *his* escaping," observed Sir John; "but who dares to make this riot in our very presence?" he added fiercely, as the voice of Shawn was heard in the hall calling down the usual imprecations on his head, if he shouldn't see Sir John forthwith, no matter who was with him.

A scuffle then ensued for a moment—the door was unceremoniously thrown open, and Shawn, with blood-stained face and garments, made his unexpected entrance.

"How now, scoundrel," said Sir John, angrily, "do you dare to brawl in the very castle, and ap-

proach us, even while engaged, without permission, and bearing about you the filthy marks of drunken rioting? Over much indulgence to a ruffianly nature and the effect of drink have made you forget the awe our presence should inspire; but a brief period in the dungeons or the stocks will soon bring you to your senses again."

A good deal abashed by Sir John's wrathful tone and stern aspect, as well as by the presence of Baker who, he well knew, liked him not overwell latterly, since he had appropriated to his own use some unholy spoils which the attorney had intended exclusively for himself. Shawn, despite the native assurance so long tolerated, slunk into a corner, stammering in an apologetic tone, "Sir John, I wouldn't attempt to trouble your noble honour at all now, partic'larly whin you wor so *well* ingaged"—he could not suppress a villainous sneer, despite the check he had received, as his eye glanced from Ffolliot to Baker; "barrin to show you afore the blood was dhry, the usage I'm like to get from the priests for my loyalty, since your noble honour went to purtect one o' thim with your own hands, as the story goes."

"Come hither, sirrah, in the light."

Shawn advanced towards the window; and Sir John, after having examined the damage his satellite had received, asked him, in by no means a sympathizing tone, how many blows he had received.

"He sartinly sthruck me only wanst, Sir John. But yallow Tom never tumbled one o' your noble honour's beeves with such a blow; signs on me, it knocked me dead for near a quarther hour.

"Then there was but one priest?"

"That was all, Sir John; an' that was more than enough."

"I wish we had a score of such hitters in the fifth troop. Arthur would have no objection to command such fellows—eh, Ffolliot!"

"I should think not, indeed, Sir John," responded Ffolliot.

"Did he strike you without provocation—or are you sure that he was a priest at all?" asked Baker, coolly.

"Am I sure!" replied Shawn, in a tone of irritation, produced by the utter want of sympathy he had met with. "Yis, as sure as I am that you're hatchin' roguery this minnit, and that you'd chate your own mother."

Sir John gave vent to a low chuckle, while Ffolliot observed, "Mr. Mallowny, you should learn to be more respectful to your superiors; and I think you should not interrupt Sir John on the Sabbath, and while engaged on business, with a story that concerns only yourself."

"True," said Sir John, "as if it was of the slightest consequence, if his vile carcase was pommelled into a mummy, and particularly by a priest."

Shawn glared from Sir John to Ffolliot, whom he could have strangled where he stood, and on whom the bitterness of his heart was instantly showered.

"Well, then," he said, "may be I could tell Mither Ffolliot a story that might consarn him a little, seein' that his son still goes purty often to visit the Papists o' the lake cottage."

"Of whom do you speak?" asked Ffolliot, eagerly.

"Or Carnet Ffolliot, that, I suppose, stands for

your only son, by his mother's account," responded the ruffian, with an impudent grin.

"When was he there to your positive knowledge, and beware of what you say? If your information prove correct, you shall be rewarded—well rewarded; but if you are inventing fables for my annoyance, I warn you, I shall manage to have speedy and heavy satisfaction."

"Why he wasn't there, I suppose, since late last night, when I saw him returning with my own eyes."

"Ha! the tables are turned, Ffolliot, I see," said Sir John, with his own grim smile.

Shawn now detailed to the trio, that the Cornet had repeatedly visited the cottage, since the removal of Sir Edmund and his daughter to it. He also stated his conviction, that it was to Ballintubber Father Kilger had proceeded, and that, if a party were sent thither with him, in a day or two, he had no doubt, they should be enabled to capture both the priests, either in the cottage or neighbourhood; and, after some further plotting and conversation, it was arranged, that the party should be despatched for that purpose, and with particular directions to ransack, unceremoniously, every corner of the cottage and grounds, and that it should be under the command of Cornet Ffolliot, for the purpose of compelling him to the irksome duty of giving annoyance to those he loved as fervently as his father disliked them, while his serjeant was to receive strict injunctions, to see that the duty was sternly performed.

Shawn was now dismissed with a double gratuity, in order that he might reconnoitre for a day or two, before the party should be despatched. Ffolliot and Ker soon after left Sir John also, after having

assisted him to sanctify the Sabbath, in the manner described.

"The conduct of Arthur is very undutiful and provoking," observed Ffolliot, as the pair emerged from the castle, "in thus continuing his visits to such noted recusants after my having peremptorily forbidden them, and insisted on his not thinking further of the girl."

"It is provoking, indeed. If it had even been before that drunken Bob became a conformist, there might be a chance of large settlements with her. But now, the connexion would bring only disgrace and beggary, if he took it into his head (like a goslin as he is) to marry the girl."

"Marry, sir! you want to drive me mad. Marry *her*, after all the pains I have taken in planning his aggrandizement! By Heaven, he should sooner marry the kitchenmaid! No, no, I'll soon clip the brainless goslin's wings; and it'll go hard or I shall also drive the old recusant and his scheming daughter from the neighbourhood, and put them out of the way of giving me further annoyance."

"But have you not yourself to blame in any degree? Did you ever give encouragement to the intimacy of the parties?"

"Why, I believe that foolish woman of mine, up to her death, gave some kind of sanction to their acquaintance. But what of that? The girl is beggared now, together with being a marked and irreclaimable papist; and I shall sever the acquaintance for ever, if the jade was to be sent across the water."

"Ay, but that wild brother of her's, undutiful as he has been, I hear has been always attached to her;

and there's no saying what desperate thought might come into his head if any violent steps were taken towards her. Heigh ho! we have all our own rubs. God help all industrious, and not over-wise fathers, that waste time and talent in accumulating for thankless offspring. You see how that unfortunate boy of mine, after squandering a large portion of my hard-earned property, thought fit to become a common soldier, when I thought I had him almost fully qualified to engross a deed or prepare a brief, and nearly as well versed as myself in all the intricacies of the penal statutes."

"Well, we've had enough of an unpleasant subject—my undutiful boy will, I think, be better managed, however. But you startled me a good deal a while ago about the Lynch property."

"Yes, but you saw I took a hint very readily from your looks, though at the same time, in reality, the conformance of Sir Robert (as they call him) will be a serious obstacle in the way of a discovery."

"Pshaw! damn all nonsense between you and me. We know one another a long time, Adam, my boy; and you're aware I have no objection to be generous, when it's worth my while. Sir John has ample room and opportunity elsewhere for extending his lands. Make the Lynch estate mine, and the two thousand shall be made four. It would be a long time before you could get Sir John to offer such terms."

"Your terms are liberal beyond doubt, my old friend. But seriously, after long consideration on the subject, though in the end we *might* effect our purpose in the way you wish, still, if the dissolute conformist was watched and humoured, a purchase could

be cajoled from him, which would, in my opinion, be the readier and more certain way. I shall lend it every assistance in my power, claiming, of course, the same remuneration."

"Well, perhaps you are right, at least as far as appearances may be concerned. But it must be always understood that, whatever mode of management may be necessary with him, it shall, by no means, interfere with my plan for expelling his father and sister from Arthur's neighbourhood."

"And it need not, my dear sir. You are alarming yourself with shadows. One of the objects of your suspicion, Sir Edmund, is, I understand, on the very threshold of death; and the poor drunken conformist's perceptions are not so sharp but that, with my assistance, you will be enabled easily enough to prevail on the sister to give up her views and change her residence, unless your contrivances be very clumsy indeed."

"Then the sooner we begin to act the better."

"Well," soliloquized Baker, as he entered his dwelling, after having parted from his companion, "Mr. Ffolliot, since he has picked up the wealth, is becoming more rapacious than Sir John himself. At all events, I must manage my cards badly indeed if I don't play a winning game, with two such trumps in my hand."

CHAPTER VIII.

SIR ROBERT was sitting after dinner, half stupified after a hard day's hunting and drinking. There were abundant materials for carousing, before him; but he was alone; for, conformist even though he had become, his unnatural conduct to his father and sister, had, by no means, tended to make his company sought after by his seniors, while the younger and more thoughtless were, to some extent, kept aloof by his well known proneness to be boisterous and quarrelsome over his cups, so that he was frequently left, since his acquirement of the property, to the enjoyment of his own thoughts as now.

He had dismissed a groom, whom he sometimes admitted to join him over a bottle, and who had helped him to pass the last couple of hours, in discussing the merits of dogs and horses, and was enveloping himself in a cloud of smoke, from the pipe, whose contents he was inhaling, when Shawn, after having reconnoitred from without, entered the room unceremoniously.

"Well, Mr. Mullowny," said Sir Robert, as he eyed the audacious intruder, with a glance of half hatred and half fear, "what weighty matter brings you to Lynch Hall at so late an hour."

"Why, faith, nothing at all, masther—Sir Robert, beyant that bein' on a little duty in the neighbourhood, I jist dhropped in to ask how your noble honour 'as."

"And does a contam—a fellow like you, intrude

into our very dining-room, and at such an hour, without the excuse of any business whatever?"

"Poo, masther—Sir Robert, I knew I had a welcome here at any hour, now that you an' me's on the right side." He seated himself on a chair at the end of the table, with one of his impudent leers, as he continued, "an' the hall was always a place that a man never passed without curing himsel' o' the dhruth an' hunger, even in the ould times, afore yer ancesthors had the gumption to turn to the right side."

The eyes of their descendant flashed fire, and his hand was mechanically stretched towards a bottle, with the intention of levelling it at the intruder's head. But he saw that Shawn's eye watched him closely, and, despite his wrath, he controlled himself, only saying bitterly, "Well, Sir John shall know in the morning of your intrusion and insolence, as I am sure he would not tolerate you in using such insolence towards men of birth and family."

"O *masther* Robert," said the unabashed priest-hunter, helping himself to a glass of brandy with the coolest effrontery, while his host by compulsion, glared at him with fierce astonishment, "there might be many a thing it ud be better Sir John ud know nothing at all about—your health, *Sir Robert*—but (after finishing his glass and smacking his lips twice or thrice) how many times wère you at church for the last five or six weeks?"

"What affair is that of yours, sirrah?" said *Sir Robert*, with a start.

"Arra be aisy now, *Sir Robert*; may be it is'nt faith. Do you know what ud be the fine, an' who it ud go to? You haard, too, I suppose, ov such a

thing as a relapsed papist, an' know what ud be his punishment; an' I can tell there's more nor one ud give a thrifle to know as much about yer honour's ways as we do. But as I have no spite in the world agin you, an' you'r none o' my *riglar* game"—he filled a second time—"yer health agin Sir Robert—I'm not goin' to make an *informer* o' mysel', purvided there's always a good bit an' sup in the hall for a poor fellow passin', an' that you grease his fist now an' thin with an odd balloon (guinea) or a dollar."

"You shall be taught to repent this presumption, as sure as your name is Shawn na Soggarth."

"May be it's yoursel', Masther Robert, that ud repent not takin' a friendly warnin' in civility. Why there's a brace o' priests this minnit in the neighbourhood, an' what ud you think if people sed you wor helpin' to consale them?"

"I see clearly now," roared Sir Robert, starting from his seat, utterly enraged by the falsity of this accusation, "that your sole object in coming here, this evening, was to annoy and insult me. But what would *you* think if I was to direct the servants to place you under the pump for half an hour, and then wear a couple of whips on your vile bones?"

"You'd lose an arm to prevint them if they wor even inclined to do it," replied Shawn, filling a third glass with undisturbed composure; "an' you'd be right, masther Robert, as it mightn't tell well to have *me* assaulted in such a noted house as the hall, not to talk that it ud be ill your commons to do so, afther all the love an' likin' I'm afther showin' you. But as I'm well rested and refreshed now, here's long life to you, *Sir* Robert, an' many thanks for your kind treatment—only be a little more partikler about goin'

to prayers an' other religious duties, as the clergy say."

Sir Robert had stooped to rekindle his pipe ; and Shawn, seizing from the sideboard the nearest bottle to him, and, placing it between his inner coat and *cothamore* (outside, or great coat), moved more leisurely out of the hall than he had entered it ; his worried and indignant entertainer (against his will) following fast behind him, vowing fierce vengeance against the menials if they ever permitted his steps to pollute the threshold again.

Shawn now directed his steps to the cabin of his sister, Nancy Mullowny, alias Loughnan, which was distant about a mile from the hall. Nancy was, at the time now treated of, a youthful widow, with the care of a couple of infant children and a few acres of ground, with some cattle left by her late husband, Tom Loughnan. She was rather comely in person, and a gentle, kind-hearted, affectionate creature ; and was, accordingly—despite her brother's evil reputation—a general favourite among her scattered neighbours. She possessed also, in a high degree, her countrywomen's strong religious feelings, and felt, of course, keenly and bitterly the infamy of her brother's course, so that for some time past they seldom exchanged words, except, when, at long intervals, he found it convenient, as now, to make her cabin an asylum for a few hours.

His present unlooked-for and most unwelcome visit was a source of peculiar annoyance, as the youngest of her children was apparently sick to death, and she had, that morning, a promise from Father Bernard, that he would visit the child in the evening.

"This is a cool reception, Nancy, for a brother that didn't darken your doors for a twel'month afore," he said, flinging himself on a seat by the fire, while she moved to the opposite end of the little kitchen on his entrance; "but I know how it is: there's no welcome for me anywhere, among high or low, sthrangers or friends; bekase I'm too loyal."

"You know well, John," she said, "that nobody was ever gladder to see another than we used to be to see you, ever an' always till—till—"

"Well, to give the divle his due, you wor always the best o' the family. So here sit down an' take a toothful o' this"—he drew forth the bottle of brandy he had taken from the hall—"an' tell us how you're gettin' on at all, this world."

"No, John, you know I was never fond o' the dhram dhrinkin'. But I'm glad to hear you axin' nathrel questions. May the Lord touch your heart an' put nathrel feelin' into it."

"Well, Nancy, as you wont have a taste, I must take a pull myself. Here's your health; an' rale beautiful stuff it is. An' how's the poor *gorlaghs*? It's long since I saw thim."

"Wan o' them, little *baunysen* is, I'm afraid, John, goin'—goin' to a betther world"—the eyes of the mother filled with tears—"but any way," she continued, rubbing them away with her hand, "it does my heart good to hear you inquirin' that way for them."

"An' why wouldn't I have love an' likin' for my own flesh an' blood, and the purtiest little craithers in the parish? I know people sees that I'm this an' that; but you see now I have the nathrel affection
ll. Yis, Nancy, an' to show you I've a leanin',

too, even for the clargy, that they say I'm always persecutin', I know there's two o' them, this minnit, in this neighbourhood; an' I could tell them something that might save them from harm."

His sister looked eagerly into his face: but there was something in its expression, that instantly repressed the information she was about to give on the impulse of the moment. "John," she said, starting from his side, to which she had gradually approached, "there is wickedness still in your countenance, an' it's for no good you're makin' those inquiries."

"Now, Nancy, to show that you're an *onshough*, an' suspectin' me in the wrong, bring me to the house the priests is in, an' I'll tell them what I know to your face, or I'll tell it to *you* now an' you can carry it to them yoursel', while I stay here till you return."

"No, no, no, John," she exclaimed vehemently; "I see now what you're after. You want to get intilligence out o' me, that I don't know mysel', an' that I'd pull the tongue out sooner nor tell you, if I did know. O, God forgive you, John, for your hardened heart an' all the disgrace you're bringin' on our name."

"Hould your tongue an' don't aggravate me any farther, ye dhrunken barge;" he took another long pull from the bottle—"if I wasn't tindher hearted, I'd have yourself an' yer brats thransported many a long day ago for yer thricks in neglectin' worship an' helpin' priests, that it's the duty ov a loyal man or woman to inform agin; an' take care how soon I'd do it still."

"An' if you did to-morrow, I'd prefer far afore

helpin' you in your divlish schemes, that the curse o' God 'll folly, sooner or later. O, John, John, do you remimber long ago whin we used to be kneelin' together to our poor mother (the heavens be her bed this day!), an' you used to be taichin' me my prayers that we wor afeared to speak out; an' how she used to say you'd turn out a good man an' a credit to the family? I of'en dhrame o' these days, an' wondher to mysel' can you forget them intirely—you can't, John; you must think o' them sometimes, wild as you are."

"Hould yer tongue, an' bedamned to yer dhrunken foolish head."

"John, there's but the two ov us in the world now, an' if ye wor to know how it makes my heart bleed whin I hear them talk o' my only brother with curses; an' how of'en I'm on my knees prayin' to the God an' the Vergin to change your heart —."

"To the Vergin, ye sthrap! Well I knew ye wor a papist in your heart all along."

"O, John asthore, my only brother," she exclaimed eagerly, laying her hands on his shoulder and looking earnestly into his face, "you have been persecutin' holy men an' doin every sort o' wickedness for many a long year; an' what have you by id, barrin' the curses of the world? Give up such doins thin at wanst this blessed night, and leave Sir John's employment, an' I'll share the last mouthful I have in the world with you; or we'll both go to some other counthry where he'll never find or hear ov you agin."

"The glory of hell to you, ye dhrunken mad-women, what talk is this to a loyal man an' a thrue Christian? Why, you ought to be hanged or thrans-

ported without judge or jury for it. But let us have no more clackin'”—he raised the bottle again, and both foot and tongue began to exhibit still stronger proofs of the extent of his libations, as he continued, “but tell me at wanst where—where’s those dogs o’ priests, as I am sure you know it, and I’ll give you part o’ the re—reward which ’ll be a round pen—penny.”

“Not for the weight o’ myself in goold, Johnny, even if I knew id. That the tongue may rot from me day the that I’d spake a single word to help your cursed plans!”

“Thin may the sev—seven divels”—we shall not complete the hideous imprecations—“if I don’t give you worse us—usage, nor ever even your fool ov a husband gev you”—he staggered towards and seized her by the hair, when one of the children shrieked wildly, from the little inner room where both were lying, “*mauther, mauther*, (mother, mother,) don’t be fightin’ with that wicked man. Poor *Bawnyeen’s* cryin’ for you, only ye can’t hear her.”

The alarmed and agitated mother burst away from her brutal assailant, and flinging herself beside the little sufferer, whose heavy eye brightened for a moment at her approach, despite of suffering and sickness, put her lips to the little cheek and kissed away the tears, whispering softly “God relieve you a *haskya* (my treasure) an’ look with an eye o’ pity on my own darlin’. Don’t cry *bawnyeen machree*, your own mother is with you.”

“I’m afeard o’ that bould man. Don’t let him in, an’ don’t go near him any more—don’t mammy, don’t,” whispered the terrified child, in a voice scarcely audible through terror and illness; and she

placed her little wasted hands about her mother's neck to prevent her moving.

"Don't be afeard, my own little *corra machree*, (pulse of my heart) he won't come near us," the mother was repeating, when she was interrupted by the voice of Shawn, shouting to her to come forth again.

Startled by the first cries of the children, he had paused a moment after his sister had escaped from him; but quaffing once more, though he was scarcely able to raise the bottle to his lips, he called on her, with imprecations, to come forth, for a drunken strumpet.

"You'r not com—comin' thin," he roared, as he received no answer to his call: "you wouldn't be so la—la—lazy, if 'twas goin' to meet Fer—Fergus the rap—rap—par—rapparee you wor, ye dhrunken sthrum—umpet. But I know all your thricks, an' I'll help Fer—Fergus to the gal—gallows the soon—ooner, for *your* sake. Out with you at once, an' tell me what I want, ye fag—agot, or by— I'll go in an' sthran—angle yoursel' an' yer scoreech—eechin' brats."

He staggered towards the open doorway, but striking his foot against its under foot frame, fell into the room with an imprecation, the bottle slipping from his hand at the same time with a crash on the floor, while mother and children were too much terrified to venture even a scream. After having quieted the infants with some difficulty, and ascertained that her vile brother was stretched on the floor utterly insensible, Nancy passed softly by him to the outer door, where she stood listening for some time with intense anxiety, as it was, she thought,

nearing the time the priest had appointed for visiting the cabin. She moved some yards from the door to try to catch the sound of voice or footfall, for it was now completely dark ; but, having detected neither, returned rapidly lest her infants or infamous brother should be stirring ; and in this state of anxious suspense, upwards of two harassing hours were passed by the agitated mother in soothing the sick child, visiting the front door, and ascertaining that Shawn was still wrapped up in his restless slumber of drunkenness. At last, when she began to fear, or rather, under the present circumstances, almost to hope that Father Bernard would not come at all that night, she was startled by a tap at the window ; and as she approached the door, she could distinguish the voice of Johnny M'Cann repeating in a low key,

“ Open the door, my charming Nancy :
I'm the boy can suit your fancy
With gowns and trinkets, frills and caps
That 'll stir the hearts of all the chaps.”

Opening the door softly, “ hush, hush Johnny,” she said ; “ wan o' my childhren is very sick—but is there no one with you but yoursel' ?”

“ There is, Nancy,” said Fergus Cormick, moving forth from the gable, followed by another person closely muffled, “ myself an' Father Davy.”

On hearing *his* voice her knees shook beneath her, in consequence of Shawn's late allusion to him. But not perceiving this effect, of course, Fergus continued : “ he was looking for his uncle Father Bernard, that he haard was in this neighbourhood. He haard, too, that Shawn na Sog—your brother,

was seen about Ballintubber this evenin', and I brought the priest to *your* house as bein' the place Shawn will be sure not to come near, whilst myself an' Johnny strives to make out Father Bernard for him."

"Holy Virgin!" she exclaimed, "an' he's in the house this minnit, where he didn't put a foot afore this two long years."

At this announcement, Fergus clapped his hand on a pistol he had concealed in his breast; Johnny tightened his pack, and clutched with a fierce grasp the heavily leaded stick he carried, while the priest observed, "then we must be off at once."

"There's no occasion, yer reverence," she said earnestly; "the unfortunate reprobate—God pity me that has to call it to him—is so dhrunken asleep for the last two hours, that if all the clergy in the three counties was here, he could neither know nor middle with them. So your reverence can rest yoursel' awhile, an' Father Bernard may come too, as he promised to come to see little Bawnyeen afore this time——do you think I'd be desavin' ye, Fargy," she continued more earnestly on perceiving them hesitate a moment, "an' a holy man puttin' his feet inside my cabin this night, where wan didn't stand afore, since Tom was alive, the heavens be his bed?"

"I know you wouldn't, Nancy, if you wor to lose your life over again for it—but is there no danger ov *his* wakenin'?"

"Not the laist; an' if he was awake this minnit, he couldn't harm or hurt an infant."

The party now entered noiselessly and seated themselves hardby the fire, which soon blazed brightly;

and Nancy, having once more satisfied herself that Shawn still slept, despite all objections, placed some oat bread, with milk and butter, and a few eggs, before her visitors, who seemed to vie with each other in doing justice to the humble but wholesome fare.

The simple repast was not quite finished when the suffering infant again whined and moaned fretfully, and the poor, fond mother—wrought on by its piteous cries to the forgetfulness of all else—bore it gently from its place of unrest, and, on bended knees, with faith and hope in her countenance, held it up to the priest for his benediction and intercessory prayers. Father Davy was in the act of offering those up when they were all startled by a terrified shout from Shawn, who, the next instant, staggered forth under the excitement of some terrible vision, with hair on end and eyes starting from their sockets, though evidently without the capability of comprehending what was passing before them.

The priest instinctively fell back into the shadow of the chimney, and the infant nestled silently into its mother's bosom, utterly awed by the appearance of the remorse-stricken wretch, who, rolling his eyes about wildly, exclaimed, "Father Myles, you have no business comin' afther me. I didn't lay hands on you, an' if you went with us easily, you wouldn't be shot. Thin what do you fasten yer burstin' eyes on me for, an' shake yer bloody hair? I tell you I didn't pull the thrigger, an' why don't ye follow thim that did it? Hell's flames to you! Take yer eyes off me: they're burnin' me to the heart; an' I know well enough what you mane with yer bloody hands up. You mane to give me yer curse; but

what do I care for that, if yer eyes wor off me? Murther—murther, he has his broken jaw laid on me, and I feel his could breath coulder than the snow. Blazes to ye all, will ye let him sthrangle me—*sthrangle* me?" He gasped—stamped fiercely, and, covering his eyes with his hands, sank against the wall, while the spectators shrunk from the energy of his remorseful terrors; his tortured sister sinking with her infant on the floor, as she exclaimed bitterly, "'tis my uncle—my uncle, Father Myles, that's hantin' him, that was shot because he was deaf whin they wor takin' him."

In an instant the guilt-haunted wretch again started forward, exclaiming wildly, "what, more, more? why do ye follow me? I had no hand in ye, an' I'm not afeard o' wan o' ye"—he made an attempt to rush forward, but staggered, and would have fallen on the hearth, had not the priest caught and placed him once more against the wall, shaking him heartily at the same time.

Aroused to consciousness by the shock, Shawn, now fixed his eyes for a moment as steadily as he could on the party before him, exclaimed, with one of his usual imprecations, "I know ye all now—Johnny M'Cann, Misther Priest, that sthruck me a Sunday, and Fargy Cormick the rapparee. An' it was ye that was tormintin' me afther; but the hangman 'll finger yer windpipes soon an' sudden for it."

Fergus snatched the stick from M'Cann, and raised it to fell the drunken and audacious threatener, while M'Cann, with more deadly intentions, took the pistol in exchange. But catching the arm of Fergus, Nancy said imploringly, "Fargy—Fargy, villain an' 'l as he is, would you kill *my* brother?"

Fergus looked at her for a moment, and returned the stick to the hands of Johnny, who also returned to him, though reluctantly, as the baffled tiger retires from his intended prey, the pistol his fingers had been itching to use; and Shawn, after a few minutes silence, burst forth once more into a rhapsody of hedious imprecations and terror-wrung exclamations, that rendered him for the time, almost as much an object of compassion as of aversion to the three listeners. But we shall drop the curtain on the remainder of the scene, nor seek to harrow further the reader's feelings, by repeating the ravings of guilt, remorse, mortal terror, and despairing defiance.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE are some favoured beings in this chequered world, whose path through life seems to be entirely amid flowers and sunshine,—who are familiar only with joy and gladness, and to whom sorrow and suffering are as things of another, far-off sphere, with which they can have no sympathy. This is, however alas for human happiness! not the ordinary lot of humanity. There are others doomed to toil for ever, amid the thorns and brambles, above whose over-cast horizon, the sun of hope and happiness has scarcely ever, for a moment, gleamed—never can gleam, who seem to have inherited suffering and woe, as a birthright, and to whom the house of mourning would appear to have been assigned, even from creation, as an abiding-place.

For them there is no green spot whereon to rest. They have no breathing-space to rejoice in the shadow of trees, the song of birds, the blue skies, and the gush of waters. The gloomy angel of their fate permits them no period of repose, but, with ruthless hand, hurries them on without pause or stay, from one scene of suffering to another; and, somewhat resembling this gloomy minister of fate do we feel ourselves to be acting at present, as we are compelled to lead the reader from one chamber of sickness to another, though of a different character.

A clouded October evening was nearing its close, and the window of Sir Edmund's small room in the cottage was partially opened in accordance with the patient's earnest request, as the day had been unnaturally warm for the season.

"I hope my dear father is not injuring himself by admitting the evening air so freely," said Ellen, softly approaching the bed, where the emaciated sufferer lay apparently in sound slumber at present.

"Throth thin I hope not, too, Miss Ellen," said Katty, as she was busily preparing some whey; "an' I think he's mindin a bit also, wake as he is. His sleep is more nathrel, an' his eyes look livelier nor they did this many a day afore, though I was greatly afear'd last night for him afther seein the *coastya bower* (deaf coach), an' hearin the terrible noise it med, for all the world like the roarin o' cannon."

"I thought," observed Ellen with a faint smile, "as the term 'deaf coach' would seem to imply, that it was supposed in general to move noiselessly."

"An' may be it dosen't sometimes, though, other times, id rowls like tundher. Didn't mysel' an' laggy Durkan see id wanst afore, an' you could

hear a pin dhrop as id passed? But may be you too, Miss Ellen," continued the crone, with some asperity, "like the rest o' them, think I'm grown an ould dotard that fancies I see things that never was in the world."

"The farthest from it in the world, dear Katty," exclaimed her mistress, eagerly: "I know you to be as sensible and as clear sighted as any one in the world—of your age. But when mind and body are exhausted with watching and sorrow, the youngest of us may fancy things that never occurred. O, I don't mean to say you were dreaming—indeed I don't. But why did you not call me to view the strange sight, as you know I have less to fear of the dead than of the living?"

"An' sure enough so I would," said the soothed old woman, "barrin that you wor asleep whin the masther began to moan about midnight, last night. So I went my lone an' gev him a dhrink; an' he went into a throublesome sleep agin; an' mysel' goes over to the chair at the windy, to sit awhile an' thry would he grow aisier. Well *a huskya* (my treasure), I opened the shutters to thry what kind ov a night it was; an' if I did, lo an' behold you, I haard a noise at wanst as of something was rushin in the air, an' I saw some hugeous black thing tairin like mad up to the cottage. Well, I couldn't take my eyes off id, though my hair was stickin up ov an ind with the fear, till id kem in front o' the windy, an' thin I seen *the coastya bower* as plain as I see you now, Miss Ellen—God be good to us, an' purtect us from all danger from the livin an' the dead—*aumen a Hyerna* (amen Jesus)"—she crossed herself thrice with great fervour. "There it was, a big black coach, with

four headless horses, all as black as a coal, an' the dhriver all in black, an' without a head too, an' the long black feathers up out ov id, noddin about. But id didn't stop a second, but went round the cottage like a tundherboul't."

"Then for so brief a view, you have been enabled to examine it very accurately, and even when you might naturally be too much frightened to lobb so sharply at it."

"As for that, Miss Ellen a *hegur*, af I was to get the world, an' twinty worlds for id, I couldn't take my eyes off the thing, though my flesh was creepin' an' the big could dhrops fallin' like rain from me, an' could feel the flure shakin' inundher me."

"But surely, Katty, there was hardly light enough for you to see everything you describe so accurately at a glance."

"There it's agin, Miss Ellen; you're still thinkin' it's an ould colliagh's story, an' what signifies what an ould dotin' colliagh see. But I tell you, Miss Ellen, there *was* light enough, bein' as how that the moon-light was a'most as bright as the day, more betoken there was six plumes a'most as tall as a man; an' I could see the horses' shoes an' persave undher the funeral cloth, the form ov a grate coffin retchin' from one ind o' the coach to th' other. God forbid it should mane any thing about the poor mather."

"Amen," fervently responded her mistress.

"*Be the hush* (hold your tongue), Miss Ellen darlin', isn't that a noise?" exclaimed the terrified old woman, and flinging herself on her knees, she began to pour forth rapid but unconnected prayers and ejaculations. Her fears were, however, greatly disproportioned to their cause at present, as the sounds

that had alarmed her were but those of the withered leaves in front of the cottage, displaced by light and cautious footsteps approaching the window, and, on Ellen's moving to the door, the whispered tones of Frank claimed admission for himself and Father Bernard.

Instantly they were admitted, and, after a cordial pressure of hands with the delighted girl, the priest was proceeding to soothe her father, when Katty, recovering from her terror, rather screamed than said, as she fidgetted from off her knees, "An' is id yersel', afther all, Father Bernard a hegur, an' not the *coasty a bower*? An' you're not kilt still—blessed be the Vergin—afther returnin' from foreign parts an' all the rummagin' o' the throopers an' cursed Shawn—the divle lay a heavy hand on him, soon an' suddent, *aumen a Wirria* (amen Mary),—axin yer reverence's pardon for cursin'."

"Hush, my poor old woman," said the priest, placing his hand on her head, "you will awaken your master. Besides, you know we are not too safe just at present."

"Ou, to be sure, why should I be let spake at all? An' ov course, Father Bernard, an' me not seein' you this seven years, you, no more nor another, wouldn't think id worth your while to give yer blessin' to an ould colliagh."

With a smile, Father Bernard figured the symbol of salvation over her head and passed on, while Katty continued to mutter with somewhat of apparent grumbling, but with as much real gratification as she could allow herself to exhibit.

The invalid awoke calmly from the most placid slumber he had enjoyed for many days, while the

placed in hollowed turfsods in crevices of the unplastered walls, and which shot no visible flame through roof or interstice, gave all the light the assemblage either could command or would venture to use.

On Frank's entrance there was a movement; and Fergus darted forward from the interior to meet him. But there was neither shout nor acclamation; and, though dark, fierce countenances looked still darker and fiercer, in the dim and flickering light, the assemblage closed together again in silence, except it might be that there were a few low remarks, as he was led to the upper part of the barn.

"Now, let us have a dhrop, afore we go to bisness," said *Thummaush Beg* (little Thomas), a low-sized, swarthy rapparee.

A large-sized noggin was filled with brandy from a keg placed in one of the upper corners of the barn; for the facility of obtaining smuggled brandy by the inhabitants of the wild district neighbouring the coast, was great, and illicit distillation unknown at that period.

This—Frank having first tasted its contents—went from hand to hand round the whole assembly, having been replenished some half-dozen times in its course, as each man took a lusty or a measured pull, according to his inclination or capacity, when the vessel reached him. There was no uproar, however, nor burst of merriment produced by its excitement; and an uninstructed beholder of the scene would never have supposed those he looked upon, quaffing their liquor in all but solemn silence, to be a band of Irishmen—much less of Irish rapparees.

"Boys," said Fergus, in a low but energetic tone,

after the noggin had completed its circuit, "we all know what we're here for to-night."

"Yis. We want to have revinge o' Sir John and Ffolliot," said Thummaush between his clenched teeth.

"An' to make it more sartin," rejoined Fergus, "I'm goin' to give up the command to Masther Frank for a time, if ye swair loyalty to him."

"Lynch for ever—we'll take the vestments to him," exclaimed a portion of the meeting, in the same low, fierce tone, while a few, with Thummaush, still muttered, "Captain Cormick, an' vingeance on Ffolliot."

"An' who has such a right to hate the Ffolliots, as Masther Frank?" asked Fergus, raising his voice to somewhat a louder pitch, in his excitement; "an' isn't he ov the rale ould Catholic stock, an' the pure blood o' those that wor, an' ought to be our masthers? not to talk that he has the skill, an' may be, can help us aisily to the powdher and shot we want so bad, besides, maybe, a lock o' tairin' boys, too, at a pinch"—he looked to the sailor.

"Yes, my hearties," said the latter, "choose the captain, if ye want to have yer craft steered through breaker and shoal. He's the boy can splice a rope or point a gun, if ye want it; an' maybe the boys of 'The Swallow' wont stick to him on land or on sea."

"Lynch an' the ould stock for ever! we'll swair to him," was unanimously responded.

"But boys," exclaimed Frank, getting an opportunity of being heard now, after two or three ineffectual attempts previously, "with sincerest thanks for your kind intentions, present circumstances will compel me to decline the honour you intended for

me, as I may be obliged to spread my canvass at any hour."

"No, no, Captain Frank must not leave us, till revinge is got for us all," exclaimed Fergus, placing his hand on Frank's shoulder.

"I appeal to Hanlon," said Frank.

"Yes," said the sailor, "the captain must certainly clear out one of those days, or break trust with the owners, what no true seaman would do."

"But, I'll tell you what boys," resumed Frank, eagerly, "if ye'll pledge yourselves to aid me hereafter, in obtaining vengeance on those who have driven you to outlawry, persecuted our faith, and wrecked my ancient family, I pledge a sailor's word, that I will join you, heart and soul, and risk life and limb to achieve our common object."

"We'll pledge oursel's, sowl an' body, to work by day an' by night, till we have revinge."

"Revinge on Ffolliot an' the two Shawns," was repeated in the same low cadence that had characterized the proceedings from the beginning, but with a still fiercer energy of tone.

A time-bleached skull was now produced by Fergus, from the corner where it had hitherto lain covered by a hat; and being placed on a small, broken table, conveyed into the barn for that purpose, it formed in the uncertain *faudogue* light, which could not penetrate its cavities, no inappropriate object in the scene of foul murder, and presented a ghastly contrast, to the wild, passion-distorted faces grouped about it. This object all the party in turn laid their hands on, while they swore briefly, in their vernacular tongue, to be true to each other, till their vengeance should be accomplished.

The noggin was now put into requisition, and circling its course once more, when this, the pleasantest part of the proceedings, was interrupted by a prolonged whistle from one of the scouts abroad, on hearing which, the occupants of the barn made their egress in the most unceremonious manner, and as rapidly as the narrow door would permit.

Frank and the sailor parted just without the barn; Hanlon, even night as it was, taking the—to him—well known mountain path to the coast, while Frank returned leisurely by the lake side to the cottage.

He had not proceeded far, when the cause of the interruption partly revealed itself in the measured sound of oars along the near shore of the lake, and the rich, mellow voice of one of the voyagers, chaunting low snatches of song at intervals.

The boat was somewhat in advance of Frank, and when it reached the little creek, hardby which the cottage was situated, he saw, with surprise, a man spring from it and, approaching the house, tap gently at the window; he saw, too, that the door was instantly opened and that a female figure, which he knew must be that of his cousin, stepped forth and, joining the man, moved with him towards the bench at a little distance from the boat, while, to complete his astonishment, he thought he could distinguish that the male figure and the person he had met leaving the cottage, on the evening of his arrival there, were identical, and that, of course, it was the younger Ffoliot. And while Frank remains stationary, undecided what part to act during the brief interview of the parties, we may as well, by way of affecting neither reserve nor mystery with our readers, tell them at once that Arthur Ffoliot it was and no

other, and explain to them why he was then and there the object of Frank's suspicion, and the unwitting disturber of the rapparee meeting.

Arthur Ffolliot and Ellen Lynch had been playmates from childhood, as their residences chanced to be contiguous; and Lady Lynch—an unassuming, matronly, kind-hearted woman—was inclined to take under her wing persons she considered deserving of patronage, and who were just then struggling to “raise themselves in the world,” particularly for the sake of Mrs. Ffolliot, who, in pointed contrast to her selfish, loose principled, and ambitious husband, was as meek-minded and true-hearted a being as ever existed. This intimacy was fostered, too, and increased afterwards, through the motherly care and attachment extended by Mrs. Ffolliot to the orphan girl, on the premature death of Lady Lynch. Indeed, Ellen, after her mother's decease, spent a considerable portion of almost every day at Ffolliot's Grove, as Sir Edmund was delighted that his daughter should have an opportunity of receiving the instruction and example his own indolence and the heart-gnawing cares that began to assail him unfitted him to give or superintend, from a lady who, he knew had stood for years so high in the estimation of his beloved wife, till the death of Mrs. Ffolliot, some three or four years after the death of her friend, doubly bereaved the orphan girl of a mother's care, and a mother's affection.

The latter event put an end, of course, to the visits to Ffolliot's Groves; and, as a governess was provided for Ellen, and Arthur was sent to a public school, the intimacy necessarily ceased for a time—matter that was now the source of gratification

rather than of regret to the elder Ffolliot, who was rising rapidly in affluence, and consequently, in estimation, chiefly through the extraordinary state of society, and his own tact in availing himself of it, along with some other fortunate circumstances; while partly owing to the same cause, together with his son's commencing extravagance, and his own improvident habits, Sir Edmund was sinking as rapidly. But on his return, one day, from visiting at the hall, after his education had been completed, when his father insisted that his acquaintanceship there should cease at once and for ever, Arthur ventured, for the first time in his life, to give him a prompt and decided refusal. Indeed, in the case of Ellen and himself, the temporary separation had but the effect of uniting them more closely and rapidly, as the branches of a stream, that have been disjoined for a space, flow towards each other again, with increased velocity, as if eager to atone for their brief disruption. Nearly a year before the period now alluded to, the words of mutually plighted affection had been spoken, which were not again to be unspoken; and, he had made repeated stolen visits to the hall, and afterwards to the cottage, after a cornetcy had been purchased for him, with the unfounded hope, that the novelty of the military profession, and change of scene, would wean him from his forbidden attachment.

He visited it on this evening, to renew the entreaties he had latterly several times repeated, that Ellen would consent to be united to him, before the corps to which he was attached, should be removed from the district, in which case, he affirmed, there could be no doubt that his father would be speedily recon-

ciled to them, while all annoyance from her brutal brother, *should* then, necessarily cease.

"No, Arthur," she said in answer to the reiterated solicitation, "fallen as our fortunes are, were even my dear father out of danger, as I have hopes this evening he soon will be, and to sanction our union, how would your's receive a daughter portionless, and of the proscribed creed, and on whom, I fear, he looks already with no favouring eye?"

"He would soon learn to love her, dearest Ellen, for her own beauty and endearing qualities," said Arthur, eagerly.

"You speak Arthur, from your own partial feelings. But were it to turn even out as you say, it would ill become the daughter of Sir Edmund Lynch to intrude herself into any family, like a mendicant seeking their commiseration."

"You would then, beloved Ellen, sacrifice long-tried affection to misjudged and mistimed pride," he said, reproachfully.

"No, Arthur, I am only stating what I think called for from the descendant of a long line of unstained ancestry, however fallen its present representatives—you will pardon the boastful expression—and which causes itself to be more strongly felt, because the evil blast of misfortune has swept over us."

"But my own, own Ellen, would your fine sense allow you to think it just that the happiness of us both should be forfeited for ever, to gratify the indulgence of proud feelings, however unnatural? Surely—surely it would not."

"Besides," she rejoined, turning aside as if he could have seen in the more than twilight darkness, "his tears his passionate earnestness had started freely,

“were there no other obstacle, the difference of our creeds would, in those unfortunate times, be a perpetual spring of disquiet—”

“Ellen my own and only love,” he said, interrupting her eagerly, “don’t make me think you are seeking out for causes of refusal, and that you already regret the delicious avowal you blessed me with so shortly ago. What are creeds to me, whose idolatry is yourself?”

“But, Arthur, you do not know how you might be galled by the sneers of the world at the persecuted faith of your wife; and you can scarcely conceive,” she added, with enthusiasm, “how devotedly my soul clings to that persecuted faith, which not even you could induce me to exchange for your favoured one.”

“Surely, dearest Ellen, you must have more trust in the love of years than to think it could be affected by the sneers of a heartless world. Preserve your faith, then, my love, and practice it in secret, as it may not be safely done in public, and I pledge myself by the hope of the lifelong years that are, I trust, just opening to us, that I shall never either meddle or interfere with the manner of your devotion, as I have boundless confidence that affection will teach you to be tolerant to *mine*——”

The loud ringing of the bell in the cottage interrupted him.

“Good night, Arthur,” said Ellen, startled by the bell, and moving towards the cottage. “You will have a dark passage home.”

“Then say one *little* word, Ellen, before you go,” he said, grasping her hand.

“Not to-night, Arthur—dear Arthur. Good night, and God send you safe.”

"Good night, my precious love"—he pressed her little hand between both his, kissed it repeatedly, and betook himself to his boat, after he had seen her enter the cottage.

CHAPTER X.

ELLEN found, on entering the cottage, that the bell had been used as a summons from Katty, in consequence of a sudden and startling change in Sir Edmund; and, on approaching the bedside, she was utterly shocked—almost paralyzed by the fearful alteration produced by a few minutes. His jaw had fallen; his lips were become compressed, and his eyes rolled vacantly, as she leant over him, her own almost sightless with tears. They closed, however, as she leant, and every appearance gave token of fast approaching dissolution.

She looked piteously towards the bewildered old woman, and sinking on her knees, prayed aloud, but with tear-broken prayers, for his recovery; for, as yet, she knew so little of death, that she could not bring herself to believe or admit that he could die. She prayed long and fervently, and before she had ended, the eyes again opened, and she sprung joyfully to her feet.

"Ellen—is this my own Ellen?" he said in a low faint voice, his eyes settling on her with a dim and struggling gaze, after having glanced wildly around, and his cold wasted fingers, resting on her's, which, delicate as they were, half feared to return the pressure, lest it should be too harsh. And she feared justly. Frequently have the dying complained exultantly of the fervour of the mourner's grasp—

the last grasp they could feel in life; and the remembrance of that complaint, has continued to be a source of discomfort for many an after year.

"Ellen," he continued slowly, and struggling hard for the fast departing breath, "I be—lieve I have been dream—ing, or am I still in re—a—li—ty in this world? I thought I was with your mo—ther, and that we were again joined for e—ver, and we were long—ing for you; and oh, it must be a long way back, I feel so wea—ried, and I must re—turn —God in heaven bless you, my own jew—el, and be a fa—ther—to you—and—keep—you—in—the true—f—a—i—t—h." The eye gradually closed for ever. Like the wasting taper, its light became extinct; but while the faintest glimmering remained, it was shed on her, whom its extinction left an utter orphan, in a troubled world; and the lips were in motion, endeavouring to shape her name after the power of utterance had ceased.

Ellen neither shrieked nor fainted, though the old woman uttered a fearful cry when the eye closed and the head fell. *She* only took the stiffened hand in, her own, glued her mouth to his, when she thought she felt the breath still issuing, and besought her dear father to say only one small word, that she might know he still heard her. She could not bring herself to believe the father she so loved, and by whom she was so beloved, could thus depart and leave her alone and desolate with so little warning. She placed her hand on his brow, his heart—put her ear to his mouth—his nostrils, hoping to catch some indications of still breathing existence. Oh, the first death-bed of those we love that we are condemned to witness, is a fearful trial to the young

and affectionate spirit! It is hard *then*, before the chilling scenes and experience of life have rendered us callous, to reconcile us to the certainty that the hand is cold and stiff, that was wont to clasp ours so warmly—that the tongue, familiar from infancy, shall never more welcome us again—that the eye, which never looked on us but with unaltering affection, shall never more brighten at our approach.

It was not until some time had elapsed after the spirit had flown, and that she had made repeated attempts to obtain a response, however faint, from pulse and lip, that the overpowering conviction forced itself on Ellen, that she was, indeed, parentless; and then, at last she would have sunk to the floor, but that she was caught in the arms of Frank, who had silently entered a few minutes previously, after having had a protracted and satisfactory interview with Arthur Ffolliot, and who bore her from the room.

The rumour of Sir Edmund's death spread but slowly in that scattered neighbourhood; and but few were the mourners—chiefly aged women and boys—that congregated to the wake that night. But on the following night there was a considerable assemblage of the peasantry, many of whom had come several miles to testify their regret and respect for him, however fallen, under whose fathers, they and theirs had lived for centuries and centuries. There was, however, no wild or noisy wailing, owing less, perhaps, even to the circumstances of the times, than to respect for the sacredness of Ellen's grief.

She bore her bereavement, after she had once become convinced of its reality, with much more calmness and resignation than either Frank or herself had calculated on. After having, with Frank's

consent, spent an hour in tears and prayer alone with the corpse, when it had been "laid out," she rose from her knees, and, controlling at once the rushing tears, turned, with a determined composure few of her years could assume, to direct arrangements, and have refreshments liberally prepared for the wake visitors; the liberality she was enabled to exercise in this respect being, as usual, a source of consolation, however melancholy.

It was late in the night after Sir Edmund's decease, when Father Kilger entered the cottage. He had been in a distant portion of the parish, and had not learned the tidings of his old friend's death, till a few hours previously, since when, he had crossed streams, and traversed mountain and bog in the rain and darkness, in order to reach the cottage before the funeral could possibly take place. Immediately after his entrance, having offered some consolation to Ellen, on her last and greatest bereavement, and exhorted her to bear it, as the Christian should, without murmuring and without repining, he proceeded to give her the highest consolation human being could afford, by the celebration of Mass for her father's eternal repose. Preparatory, however, to the sacred ceremony much caution was requisite and was exercised, particularly as it was whispered by one or two that Shawn was seen hovering about the neighbourhood in the evening. The corpse room was occupied by some aged men and women—the long attached and faithful retainers of the Lynch family, with a few juniors of their respective families; and thither, after a searching scrutiny among the occupants of the parlour and kitchen by Frank and the priest—

the latter arrayed in humble lay garb, with hat slouched and coat muffled—such of these as were deemed trustworthy, were also drawn gradually and by whispered invitations; some being left undisturbed, a few, known to be faithful persons, for appearance sake, and a few suspected either of having attended the wake through curiosity, or whose known and frequent intercourse with Sir Robert, caused them to be, in the present case, objects of suspicion.

When the congregation, selected to partake of the Mass, and consisting of about twenty persons, young and old, were gathered into the small corpse room, which they completely crowded, the door was locked and the window-shutters fastened, with a thick screen suspended inside them, lest, from the lowness of the window, the slightest glimpse of the proceedings could be obtained from the outside, while a kerchief was placed over the keyhole, that no prying eye might benefit by it. Then the priest having hurriedly arrayed himself in the few sacerdotal robes he had kept secreted beneath his disguise, commenced the service in a tone little above a whisper, but which was distinctly audible and eagerly heard amid the intense silence preserved by the little group—a silence almost as profound as that of the corpse for which they prayed. Eagerly indeed did Ellen, above all, listen to the holy words so seldom heard of late, and which, she knew, would have been so highly prized by him for whom they were offered up. It seemed as if her spirit—altogether sublimated from earthly thoughts—were poured forth with each prayer, though, now and then, she was obliged to bow her head, to rub away

the fast rushing tears, as her eye involuntarily wandered from the clergyman and the ceremony he was performing to the pallid face of the dead, so soon to be hidden from her view for ever; while Father Bernard—his tall, thin person and spiritual features rendering him no inapt representative of a mediator, as he stood between the living and the dead—performed his functions with fervour and deep feeling, low as were his accents, notwithstanding that, occasionally, he could not control a glance of doubt and fear towards door and window. And it was well those precautions had been taken, as the ceremony was barely at its conclusion, and the partakers only preparing to leave the room gradually, and one by one, when the voice of Sir Robert—now Sir Robert beyond all disputation—was heard in loud and violent altercation with some, who were attempting to stay his progress beyond the little hall that divided the parlour from the wake-room. He was evidently intoxicated, and his voice completely terrified the occupants of the wake-room, with the exception of Frank, who, with flashing eye, was proceeding to open the door, in order to beard the brutal bacchanal without.

“No, no, Frank, you shall not endanger us all to indulge your excited temper, whatever excuse there may be for your excitement at present,” said Father Bernard, placing himself against the door, and laying one hand on Frank’s shoulder, while with the other he hastily concealed the sacerdotal robes again within the coarse garments he had resumed. “I know that voice, too, and it bodes good neither to those individuals here nor to me, were we to be seen through your means; besides, that any collision would,

surely, be out of place and character just now, however gross the conduct of the misguided boy. That window, small as it is, will permit of our egress, without risking such unholy collision; and in that direction you must come with me, by which means we shall avoid endangering the living and disrespecting the dead—let us move at once then.”

“Father Bernard is right, dear Frank; and do remove yourself with him for a few hours for all our sakes,” said Ellen, after a moment’s pause.

“And leave you exposed to drunken and brutal insolence, Ellen, were even nothing further to be feared!”

“There is nothing to be feared for me, Frank,” she said, earnestly; “but as you would save from insult the poor remains of him who loved you—loved us both—oh—Frank, go at once——” a burst of hysterical sobbing overpowered her, and she sank against the bed.

“I am gone, dearest Ellen!” he exclaimed; and with an agility pertaining to his form and habits, he had passed through the little window which had been opened by the priest, and was assisting the latter in his less active descent.

They had scarcely completed their egress when Sir Robert, having broken away from those who had been endeavouring to detain him, kicked fiercely at the door, exclaiming in a tone of drunken violence: “Open at once, I command ye. I know ye have some varmint among ye, but I’ll unearth him speedily, or blazes to me.”

The door was instantly opened; and the scene that met his view might well have sobered and softened any one less hardened than himself. His

sister was resting on the bed, looking almost as pale and lifeless as the parent stretched beside her, while the hushed silence of the other shrinking occupants corresponded well with the lighted candles and the other insignia of a death chamber. And the sight had a momentary effect. He paused in the doorway and stared wildly around. The effect was but momentary, however; for he was in that state of half drunkenness—not drunkenness itself—when the violent and evil tempered are least governable by themselves or others. Recovering instantly his intoxicated and heartless brutality, he advanced into the room shouting, “Nell, I understood you had one of the forbidden—one of the real game among ye, and I was determined to give him chase; but you have given him the start I see.”

“Robert, Robert, this is terrible,” said his sister, raising herself: “look there”—she pointed to the corpse.

“Yes, I see, Nell. He has run the course we must all run, and distanced us, I suppose. Well he was a highflyer in his day and deserved a longer course.”—

“Oh, God forgive you, Robert, for having the heart to speak so. Fallen, fallen as you were, I could not imagine that you could bring yourself to use such words respecting—respecting—Oh, God forgive you again.” She sank her face on her hands.

“Nell, you needn’t get into the heroics. I can feel as well as another; but it wasn’t to cry I came here now. I suspected and heard you intended to bury the old boy according to your own forbidden ideas, and the foolish way he lived; but I am determined he shall be buried in the lawful and respect-

able way befitting the head of the Lynches, and without any of the howling of those drunken bel-dames and brutes—perdition to them, what brings them here?” He shook his hand and stamped fiercely; and the women stumbled in confusion out of the room; the few men among them followed too, though two or three of them paused without the door to watch the issue of the scene, burning with rage, and only prevented by their affection for Ellen and their veneration for the dead, from laying violent hands, even in the wake-room, and at all risks, on the ruthless and unnatural son and brother.

“Robert,” said Ellen, starting up, and wiping away the tears which had been blinding her, “I have borne with a calmness wonderful to myself your brutality up to this moment. I have not even once accused you of having hastened the death of my darling father by your abandoned and unnatural acts. But now that you venture to assert you will inter him, whose heart you have broken, with rites contrary to those of the faith he loved and hoped in, I discard, at once and for ever, all ties between us, proclaiming you in the presence of our father’s corpse as the monster you are, and telling you to your face, you shall not dare remove a single inch the dear remains of him, to whom your very name was an abomination for many a long month past.”

Outraged grief and affection lent her a degree of energy, that completely startled her heartless brother, as she stood confronted with him, proud and erect, with flashing eye and cheek momentarily flushed from marble paleness to deep crimson. But the spirit of partial intoxication supported him, and he instantly rejoined, with a brutal laugh, “Hallo, my little girl,

I see you're true game; but you're crowing a little too loud, though you may expect to be backed by master Arthur Ffolliot or cousin Frank, that, I hear, has been seen hovering about here latterly with some of his smuggling friends. But, my little vixen, you'll soon find that even their weighty back won't be able to prevent me from burying Sir Edmund Lynch in a way worthy of his rank and loyalty, though his wake has not been so."

"Away heartless and impious renegade, and pollute not further the presence of the dead," she said, stamping her foot and clenching her small hand energetically. "Begone at once, before patience is utterly exhausted. You think I am lone and at your mercy, but you are wrong"—some two or three faces, with fierce excitement characterized on them, showed themselves at the door, and fiercely-muttered imprecations were uttered—"and you think not—cannot at present think—what such terrible provocation may produce. Away, then, to your drunken and dissolute companions, and no longer disquiet the apartment of the dead, lest heaven itself should crush you where you stand."

"Yis, Miss Ellen, darlin'," exclaimed Katty, rushing in, after having been aroused from a long slumber, with her thin, grey hairs, tossed wildly about her withered face and neck, and fury flashing from her rheumed eye, "let him begone, afore the sperit itsel' gets up, an' sthrangles him on the spot, like as *Honreese dhu* (black Henry) did with his on-dutiful son, at his own wake (to themsel's be it tould)—God an' the Vergin forgive me, that I should have a hand in rairin' sich an onnathrel crather. Sure enough it was a pinance on me, for some ter-

rible sins o' thim that came afore me. O, mather Robert, mather Robert, how can ye look on the dark, cowl'd face forenint ye, an' think ov all the times it smiled on ye, and that he had ye on his knees, af he wasn't even a dhrop's blood to ye, an' spake so hardened?"

"Be silent, you old drunken hellicat, an' get out of my way instantly, or my whip shall be on your witch-like carcass."

"Me dhrunk! ye rale dhrunken an' onnathrel brute," exclaimed the old woman with fierce bitterness; her small, red eyes, dilated for the moment, and her withered hands clenched, while her frail body shook with rage; "arra, Miss Ellen, darlin', af he ris his hand to me that carried him in my arms—I wish they wor palsied whin I did id, an' of'n an' of'n I tould Sir Edmund an' my Lady (the heavens be their bed this night) that they wor pettin' up a viper, whin I used to see his bouldness an' ondutifulness, but what signifies what an ould colliagh ses—but af he ris his hand to me, I'd claw the very face off ov him—I would, af I was to be hung for id the nixt minnit." She spoke with clenched teeth, and stretched out her long nails, as if preparing to spring wild-cat-like at his throat, while every joint in her body trembled with passion.

Utterly enraged by her bitter taunts, he raised the whip he carried; but his hand was arrested by Mr. Gordon, the rector of the parish, who entered just then.

Mr. Gordon was a liberal-minded man of extensive erudition in society, and was entirely in advance of the bigotry of the times. He had even the boldness to state his opinion openly and fearlessly on all occa-

sions, that the brutal statutes, intended to crush the Catholic faith in Ireland, would have merely the effect of vitally injuring his own religion, and, in accordance with such opinion, had frequently, in his parish, interposed the shield of his protection between the persecuted Catholic and the rigour of those vile laws. Accordingly he had been for some years in such bad odour with the dominant party, as to have completely shut out from him all prospect of high church preferment, which his influential family connexions would, otherwise, have naturally entitled him to calculate on; on the other hand, he was repaid to some extent by the respect and affection with which he was regarded, by the proscribed peasantry in his neighbourhood. He had been on cordial terms with Sir Edmund and his family, since his induction into the parish, and had been peculiarly kind and attentive to himself and Ellen, during the last two or three troubled years.

He had been already twice at the cottage to visit and console her, since her father's death; and having, on this night, been informed that Sir Robert had been seen passing on towards the cottage, late as was the hour, he, with truly charitable consideration, left the bosom of his family, in order to shorten, if he could not entirely prevent, the tumult and confusion he rightly judged would be likely to arise from the unfeeling son's intrusion into the house of death.

"Hallo, Mr. Gordon," said Sir Robert, turning fiercely round, and shaking off his restrainer rudely, "you will recollect, that though you are a parson, I care very little more for a parson, than for a priest."

"I must remember also, Sir Robert, that I am a *man*, and I wish you, too, would recollect you are

one, on so solemn, and, what should be to you, so deeply sorrowful an occasion."

"You are not in the pulpit now, Mr. Gordon; we want no sermons here, and you must not interfere in my family concerns."

"I shall interfere now and at all times, as a clergyman and a gentleman, to protect my friend, Miss Lynch, from insult and annoyance, if she wishes my interference."

Ellen grasped his hand, and looked confidently and gratefully in his face without speaking, while Katty, shaking her hand triumphantly at Sir Robert, exclaimed, "thang God, Miss Ellen has some wan to back her now, beside an ould colliagh."

"I tell you, Gordon," said Sir Robert, in a violent tone, "though I may be obliged to pay you tithes for nothing, you shall not prevent my having my father buried according to my own wish. I am not to be rode rough-shod over, like an old woman or a boy."

"I wish, Sir Robert," said Mr. Gordon, impressively, "you had shown more filial respect towards an over indulgent parent during his life, and that, instead of profaning the house of death, you were now exhibiting conduct, more indicative of the feelings of a son and a Christian, on so solemn and mournful an occasion. Then how cordially we should all unite with you in conducting the obsequies of him, whose charity and kind-heartedness so richly deserved, that his remains should be respected by all."

"You're spaikin' as thrue as the gospel, Mr. Gordon, jewel," interrupted Katty, with a shrill shout, "its himsel' that was the charitable an' the kind-hearted, the Lord is rewardin' him this night

for id in heaven; an' God bless *you* for tellin' that onnathrel and ondutiful turncoat, axin' your reverence's pardon, that it was his onnathrel conduct an' hard heart, that kilt my darlin' ould master so soon intirely."

"Gordon, you are calculating on your gown, like any other old woman," said Sir Robert, furiously, as he glared from Katty to the clergyman; "but, though you reckon on your cloth saving you from personal chastisement, you may find yourself mistaken even in that respect, if you persist in thus thwarting me in a matter that doesn't concern you; besides that, my word may be something with Sir John still."

"Sir Robert, you miscalculate my character altogether—else, you are not just now in a state to estimate it properly, or you would not deem for a moment I could be deterred from interfering in a case that affects me so strongly as this, by any personal or selfish fears. All paltry considerations in regard to preferment, you might have learned before this, I have long ago flung to the winds; and I now tell you distinctly that I shall remain here, however it may anger you, until I see you depart from a roof *you* should protect from annoyance against the world, and beneath which, nothing should have tempted you to intrude on this night, and in so unhallowed a spirit."

"The mininster has a sowl to be saved, afther all, an' he's talkin' like a Christian, sure enough," whispered Katty, to a crone who had had the hardihood to remain with her, when her other companions fled; while the infuriated baronet swore, with tremendous imprecations, he would make the benevolent clergyman retract his words, and speedily.

"Arra don't purtind to hear the bruto, yer reverence; an' mysel' an' the women alone 'll soon give him the outside, not to be aggravatin' yoursel' an' the darlin' young misthress, not to talk o' disturbin' the blessed corpse."

"Ay, pitch the blasphemins' turncoat out o' the windy," exclaimed some of the men outside the door, forgetting, in the resistless excitement of the moment, all fears for his future resentment.

Mr. Gordon seated himself calmly by the window, while Sir Robert, clutching his whip more firmly, glanced fiercely from the rector towards the door whence the voices had proceeded. There was something, however, so threatening and ominous of danger, in the wolfish eyes and fierce countenances that protruded through the doorway, that, after a brief struggle with his wrath, he moved out, swearing he would have the burial his own way, after all, and that he would have revenge, and speedily, on Mr. Gordon, and pursued by the "curses, loud *and* deep," of the devoted retainers amid whom he proceeded.

After quitting the cottage, he paused more than once, and turned towards it again, as if half determined to re-enter it and carry his point, despite all opposition—the quantity of the drink he had taken having been just sufficient, by its excitement, to render him obstinate and quarrelsome, in addition to the opposition he had met from a quarter whence he had expected none. But he was deterred by the recollection of the scowling faces he had left behind, and the certainty that there was not one friendly to him among them. So he was fain to continue his route towards the hall.

CHAPTER XI.

FATHER BERNARD and Frank had proceeded some distance in silence, when a peasant, who had watched and tracked their steps from the cottage, entreated the priest so earnestly to visit his dying wife, that, anxious as he was to ascertain as soon as possible how matters had proceeded at the wakehouse, he could not bring himself to refuse such a request, and so urged. Accordingly, he entered the peasant's cabin, leaving Frank, who preferred remaining outside, on a small eminence nearly overhanging the lake, after having obtained from him a solemn promise that he would remain there, without attempting to return to the cottage, until joined by himself again.

The moon was emerging wan and ghastly from the departing clouds, in which she had been shrouded, as Frank leant himself against a hedge on the eminence, and looked out on the waters, the nearer portion of which was softened by the clouded moon-rays into a leaden tint, while in the distance they were still of an inky hue. There was no wind: the waters flowed in on the beach with murmurs soft as those of childhood's slumbers: there was altogether a deep and impressive stillness in the aspect of the lonely landscape little in unison with Frank's excited and wrathful feelings, and he shifted his position impatiently, as he exclaimed to himself, "Yes, by heaven, it was most unmanly on my part. I should not, even for Father Bernard, have left her for an

instant exposed to the insults of an unnatural and apostate brother. Excited by liquor, too, God knows what he may have been tempted to say or do."

Stimulated by this thought, he strode forward a few hasty paces, towards a near gap in the hedge; and there, approaching him closely, was distinctly visible, in the brightening moonbeams, the man on whom his heart, if not his lips, had been just then vowing vengeance, and not for the first time.

Sir Robert, who had taken this direction to the hall through some vague idea that had sprung up in his mind, that he might, probably, meet some annoyance on the more direct path, started, on first recognizing his cousin. But the influence of the liquor, had not yet entirely deserted him; and, besides, he deemed it the better plan to keep up the blustering tone, which was indeed his natural one.

"So, master Frank," he said, "you did not think fit to favour the hall with a visit since your return with your select friends. Whether was it that you doubted my hospitality, or that you had some natural fears that my duty, as a loyal magistrate, might oblige me to take some steps that might not be pleasant?"

"Pass on," said Frank, controlling, by a mighty effort, the passion with which every vein was bursting; "and be thankful that a promise, wrung by the father you have sunk into the grave before his time, restrains my hand and prevents me from forgetting, as you have done, that the same blood flows in our veins."

"Pooh, my smuggling cousin, you would have to forget, too, that I am lord of the soil here at present, and that a word from me would soon set horse and

foot on your track, as I suppose it is, at this moment, my bounden duty to do."

"Can they save you *now*, taunting and heartless apostate?" said Frank, in a fiercely muttered tone, as he made a step, despite all promises and consequences, to grapple with his taunter.

"No, but this shall cool *you*, master Frank," said Sir Robert, drawing forth a slight but finely tempered blade from the whip he carried, and making a fierce lunge at Frank. But his active opponent, well accustomed to such deadly game, bowed himself sideways almost to the ground, to avoid the thrust, and before it could be repeated, with an exclamation that all promises were now absolved, he had wrested the weapon, and, grappling instantly, by a mingled exertion of superior strength and agility, swung his cousin beneath him on the earth. In this position, glowing with the savage excitement of the encounter—the recollection also of his uncle and Ellen's wrongs, as well as the unkind and unfeeling conduct, in words and acts, of the prostrate man, all-powerful in his mind at the moment, and the weapon intended for his own destruction free in his hand, God forgive him if his first impulse was to bury it in the body of him who had inflicted such deadly injuries on those most dear, living and dead. The weapon was raised; but it was flung away before it had descended, for a shout of wailing had arisen from the cabin into which the priest had gone, intimating that death had visited that humble scene; and, instantly after the voice of Father Bernard reached him, calling aloud, "Frank, Frank."

The sound dispelled at once his deadly intentions, as the notes of the sweet singer melt away our fiercest

resolves ; and springing to his feet he flung afar the dangerous weapon, exclaiming " Yes, I take that voice, which has saved me from, perhaps, the shedding of blood, as an omen and a warning that my promise to the dead must be kept, whatever provocation I may receive." So saying, he strode rapidly away to join the priest, with whom he quickly moved off into a thick copse that skirted the lake to some extent ; leaving his cousin to rise at his leisure and pursue his way to the hall, muttering curses and meditating revenge.

It was at the nightfall of the ensuing day that the small funeral procession set out from the cottage for Ballintubber Abbey, where the mortal remains of Sir Edmund were to be consigned to his native earth in companionship with a long train of ancestors. There was at the interment, of course, none of the state, nor the misplaced grandeur and adornments usually employed in consigning to the worms the body of a person in Sir Edmund's rank. Neither were there any of those wild passionate bursts of lamentation always attendant on an Irish burial, whatever the rank of the deceased. In silence and darkness the body was borne along on the shoulders of a few faithful retainers, while a few others, male and female, followed with noiseless and stealthy step.

There was, however, sincere mourning of heart among them for the loss of their beloved, though fallen, landlord ; while one mourner remained behind, whose grief was not to be uttered by words or wailings. Indeed, with a self-control seldom witnessed at her years, wailing Ellen had uttered none, from the first shock of her bereavement till the coffin

that contained her beloved father, from whom she had never been separated for a day, was lifted to bear him away for ever from her sight, when flinging her arms frantically around it, she protested vehemently they should not force it away, and, with a wild shriek, fell senseless on the floor.

When she recovered perception the procession was after having set forth; and Father Bernard, with his nephew the friar, was by her side, while Katty, half crying and half scolding, was supporting her. The eldest priest, after having bestowed some exhortations on the fair mourner to be patient and resigned, was moving after the procession when his nephew interfered, observing, "Father Bernard, it is better *you* should not go. The burial will be likely to be watched and you may run some risk, as it is known you are in the neighbourhood. Of me there is little or no risk, as I am almost unknown here. Leave me, then, to read the funeral service; and do you remain within, especially as I can readily go from the abbey to christen Patt Feerack's child, that's nearly fifteen months old and dying, I think, though he hasn't yet been made a Christian of.

"Perhaps he is right, dear Father Bernard, and that you had better remain here till all is over," said Ellen, faintly, as she raised herself; "there is no use in risking yourself now——now——"

"No, my beloved child, nothing but violence shall prevent me from having the gratification of being myself the consecrator of the clay that is to receive my oldest and most valued friend. Weep not, Ellen, for him who has preceded us by but a short stage, and who was, I trust, so well prepared for his journey;

but pray and hope fervently that it may be terminated in blessedness for ever ; and let me hope to find you calmer when I return."

So saying and bestowing on the bereaved one a heartsprung and a tearful benediction, he followed the funeral procession, accompanied by the friar.

It was clouded moonlight, as the dark figures in the procession, moving along in spectral silence on their mournful errand, entered the venerable and dimly-seen pile ; and well did they harmonize in the gloom and desolation of that hour and scene, as they bore cautiously and noiselessly their freight of decayed mortality beneath the roofless arches, and over the broken flagstones of the dead.

The grave of Sir Edmund's ancestors was opened for the admission of his bier which lay by the grave side ; and Father Bernard was reciting in a low tone the beautiful service for the dead, while the funeral attendants stood grouped closely around him, so as completely to shade the light of a dim lamp which the friar held for his uncle, when the noise of a shot was heard, which was instantly followed by a near shout and the tread of measured feet approaching the abbey nearly and rapidly. " We're set, we're set ; that was *Shawn na Soggarth's* shout," exclaimed more than one voice ; and instantly, as if a pestilence were in that name, the funeral attendants, stumbling over graves and overturning each other in the eagerness of their flight, had disappeared through door and window.

Shawn, indeed, it was. He had learned the period at which it was intended the funeral should take place, and having obtained a party from Sir John, so accurately had he timed his visit that, but for the

shot, he would have surprized the priest in the act of performing the funeral service. The shot had been fired by Denis Grehan, Cornet Ffolliot's servant, accidentally by his own account; which account, however, did not obtain credence, the general belief of the period having been that, having a leaning towards the persecuted party, he had profited by the recollection of his master's shot, alluded to in our first chapter, and imitated his example by conveying a warning in that shape.

"Ye bluddy thraitor," exclaimed Shawn, with one of his fearful imprecations, on hearing the shot, "ye spilet us intirely——hurry, boys, or every vagabone o' them 'll be off, an' thin the reward's in the devil's exchequer." He rushed forward eagerly and, entering the low northern doorway, shouted triumphantly, with another imprecation that echoed fearfully amid the crumbling walls and the silent abodes of the dead, "there's the tall fellow himsel'—we have him afther all;" and he dashed forward, fiercely calling on the soldiers to follow him.

Father Bernard, despite the eager and upbraiding solicitations of his nephew, was the last to quit the grave. He was in the act of lowering, with his own hands, the body into its last earthly receptacle, that it, at least, might be rescued from all risk of profanation, when he was revealed to his ruffian pursuer by a burst of bright moonlight, streaming wildly in through broken arches and windows—the lantern had been tumbled and its light extinguished in the first rush of the affrighted fugitives; and instantly on hearing the imprecation and recognizing its utterer he made for the extremity of the aisle, whence, clambering with an agility fear alone could lend at

his years, by means of some indentations in the time-disjointed stones, he reached, through a broken doorway, a portion of the stone roof of the abbey still in preservation. Not altogether scatheless, however ; for so close were Shawn's steps on his that, as he was entering the doorway, the priest hunter, then midway towards it, had grasped the skirt of his garment, exclaiming "back with you now my ould boy, unless you choose to crack your scull on the tombstones."

But Father Bernard, swaying with the energy of desperation, bounded forwarded ; and the skirt giving way, Shawn was precipitated forcibly amid the rugged grave-stones. He remained not prostrate, however, for a second, but springing forwarded with renewed imprecations, he ascended again with eager and practised steps, while the loud laughter of the soldiers rang discordantly through the ruined pile as, enjoying his discomfiture, they gazed vacantly up at the lofty arches, or flung themselves, with ribald jests, on the broken tombs and flagstones.

"[Frien' Jock's ainly like to grip ould clootie himsel' in these ould black walls, I'se thinkin'," observed one of the party, a Scotchman.

"I have him, I have him—stand, or by the glory ov hell I'll fire," shouted Shawn above.

"I hope ould Nick himsel's the ketchpool now an that he'll hould his houl't o' you, Masther Shawn," responded Denis Grehan, beneath.

A flight of those narrow stone-stairs, of such immense convenience in the old romances, and still in preservation in Ballintubber Abbey, though now nearly choked up, led from the portion of the roof, to which pursuer and pursued first ascended, to another

portion whence there was a facility of descent to the exterior of the abbey; and from nearly the summit of this the priest, having made a false step in the eager rapidity of his descent, slipped and, powerless to stop himself, came rolling to the bottom. But just as his ruffian pursuer was stooping to grasp him, a voice was heard from the small private chapel beneath exclaiming, in deep and hollow tones, "Shawn—Shawn, remimber yer uncle's awful death, and be warned by the terrible sights ye seen since." And so startling was the effect of the tone and words, arising so unexpectedly from the abode of the dead, that the ruffian sank against the near wall utterly overpowered for the moment. The moon was once more enshrouded for an instant in dense, dark clouds; and when she broke forth again, and he had recovered from his stupor, there was no one to be seen on the abbey roof but himself. Instantly darting up the narrow steps, and pushing across the other portions of the roof, after a searching glance around, he slid down the exterior wall. Still was no fugitive visible; and, after proceeding a field's length beyond the abbey, he returned and entered the private chapel fiercely, to ascertain who had been the utterer of the startling words. There too, however, he was unable to discover any living occupant, and though he called loudly and vehemently, the only response he received was the echo of his own voice, ringing through the ruined walls, mingled with the laughter peals of the troopers, on their becoming aware of his disappointment. So, after having spent nearly an hour in fruitless search for the fugitives, and the party having refused to remain any longer, he was fain to quit the walls contaminated by his presence, crestfallen and enraged,

when some of the funeral attendants, that had lain concealed behind trees and hedges, ventured to re-enter the abbey, in fear and trembling, and fling in earth and stones on the coffin, hurriedly and imperfectly, till they should have an opportunity of completing the interment without danger or disturbance.

CHAPTER XII.

A few mornings after the burial of Sir Edmund, the rector received a visit from Mr. Dixon, one of his curates, a young man with pale, pinched features, much asperity of manner, and a fierce denouncer and persecutor of his Catholic countrymen, and the law-proscribed faith—in short, who was as fiery and intolerant a bigot, as his superior was mild and tolerant.

“Mr. Gordon,” he exclaimed, in an eager, sharp voice, and scarcely waiting to be seated; “you’ve heard, I suppose, of those audacious doings last night?”

“No,” said the rector, in a tone strongly contrasting with his, “what must they have been, to agitate you so strongly?”

“Why, the cabin of Jack Brennan, one of our last converts, has been fired, and himself and family nearly burned out of it. I suppose we ourselves shall be attacked one of these nights, if things go on this way,”

“I never liked that man: ill-heartedness and

villainy are strongly imprinted in his countenance. I said from the first, that he was no acquisition to our church; and I should not wonder, if it were discovered that he was the incendiary himself. God forgive me, if I am wronging him in word or thought."

"Oh, sir, sir," rejoined Mr. Dixon, in a voice which his eagerness rendered as shrill as a cracked fife, "those opinions would seem rather calculated to cover the crimes of Popery, than to express abhorrence and desire for its extermination, and I fear much, that the leniency and shelter, so often extended to wilfully besotted Papists, in this part of the country, has tended materially to make those followers of Satan so daring in their crimes. How are we to root the abomination of Popery from the soil, and convert it into a God-blessed land, if our proselytes are not to be cherished and protected."

"I wish we had fewer converts, and more *Christians*," said the rector, laying a strong emphasis on the latter word; "as I have had bitter experience, within the last few days, of the utter want of all Christian feeling on the part of our principal convert."

"Good God, sir, is it possible you would wish to let the country remain sunk in idolatry?"

"I yield to no man, Mr. Dixon," said Mr. Gordon, warmly, "in the ardour of my wishes, to lead my poor countrymen from the error of their ways; but I have strong misgivings, whether persecuting men for a creed, or holding out a bribe to them for *professing* another, be the way to obtain such desirable object. Persecution has made martyrs—never a sincere convert; and for the man too ignorant for conviction,

and whom worldly advantage, in any shape, tempts to assume the semblance of a creed he understands not, I had much rather see that man still cling to his own faith, whatever might be its errors, as he but adds hypocrisy to his other faults, while he still, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, continues, probably, a sincerer believer than ever in the creed he has outwardly abjured."

"Are you not then, sanctioning, by implication at least, the toleration and fostering of the papistical idolatry in the land?"

"No! with the doctrines of Rome I have no sympathy. I but state my opinion of the inefficiency of persecution or bribery to alter a national faith. As a clergyman and a magistrate, I shall take every step in my power to discover the perpetrators of last night's outrage, and bring them to punishment, though I must, in sorrow, admit that such outrages are the offspring of the oppression and ruthlessness of our own party, as naturally as the reptile is engendered of the slime."

"Oppression to papists and rebels! Good God, what an expression from the lips of a minister of the established church! Have we not them prostrate at our feet, and is it not a proof of the forbearance and mercifulness connected with our pure religion, that the faggot and the sword have not been applied to those disloyal and perverse rejecters of the word, as they would unquestionably have been used, had we been the conquered."

"You seem to forget in your zeal, Mr. Dixon, that, so far from being at our feet, those same papists had a well considered treaty, ratified to them in the face of the world, guaranteeing to them the free exercise

of their religion—but we had better not persevere in a conversation we are not likely to agree in.”

“We are not indeed, Mr. Gordon, as my decided conviction is, that if our present happy laws were but strictly and impartially enforced, the ploughshare of the true faith would soon eradicate the foul weeds and tares of popery from the land; and, were it even otherwise, I, for one, would rather see it a waste, than so overgrown with the poisonous rankness of idolatry.”

“*E contra*, my opinion has been long recorded, that we have been dealing harshly, unfairly, and mistakenly with our countrymen, however we may regret their errors; and I much fear,” continued Mr. Gordon, in an impressive and a prophetic tone, “that the present persecution of the Romish church by our rulers, will recoil fearfully, for ages to come, on our own, which will, I dread much, be regarded among our descendants, in the light of a tyrant persecutor, instead of a beneficent mother, with arms outstretched to foster her reclaimed children.”

“And here comes one to give a lift to your opinions respecting toleration, I suppose,” said Dixon, with a sneer, as a frightened-looking peasant rushed rapidly towards the rectory, and, doffing his hat as he approached the window, exclaimed in eager and broken accents, “O, Mr. Gordon, jewel, they’re goin’ to put us out o’ the cabin, an’ lave hersel’ an’ mysel’ an’ the *gorlaghs*, without house or home.”

“Who are they, Harry, and why should they do so?” asked the rector.

“Bekase, plase yer reverence, ould Isaac Ffolliot, misther Ffolliot’s brother, that took out the laises for a’most the whole village, sein’ as how that—that—

yer reverence knows *we* couldn't take them out oursel's, ran away th' other day ye'll mind—a meltation hot an' heavy on his ould bones for id, axin yer reverence's pardon; an' now Sir John's turnin' us out to beg, by that hard-hearted villian 'Torney Baker's advice, bekase, he ses, ould Isaac (the murdherin' thief) isn't to the fore to prove his title, an' we have no wan to stan' up for us—may God pity us."

"Well, Harry, I shall, God willing, be at the castle to-morrow and use all my influence, which however, I fear is but very slight in that quarter, to induce Sir John to alter his determination, and allow you to remain on the spot, which, to my own knowledge, you paid for so punctually, and have done so much to improve. In the meantime here is a trifle, to assist the present necessities of yourself and family. God pity you, I repeat."

The worthy rector reached over a dollar, which the unfortunate man received with tears of gratitude, as he exclaimed, "the heavens reward yer reverence; its yer kind word an' yer help that was always to the fore whin 'twas wantin' Oh, if other Protestan' clargy was like you, we needn't be so hard set intirely for the loss ov our own priests. May heaven an' the saints, I pray again, reward you for all your goodness, here an' hereafter."

"Now, Mr. Dixon," said the rector, in a tone of partly triumph and partly sorrow, "have you a key to many of the outrages of our ill-fated peasantry, in the unprincipled treachery of a man who betrays and desolates a whole district, *compelled* by vile laws to confide in his honour and good faith? Could any homily or treatise proclaim so eloquently, too, the

almost insuperable difficulties piled up, in the way of extending our creed, by its professing friends—the framers of such laws, and abettors of such men? Good God,” he added in a more earnest tone, “what wonder if men, treated like unfortunate Gorman,—and, alas for our nature! I fear their name is legion at present—men who, after lives of patient industry, see their little cabins and plots torn from them, by fiend-like treachery and evil statutes, and themselves and helpless families flung ‘at one fell swoop,’ without shelter or means, on a merciless world—what wonder if such men should resort to crime and outrage? What wonder, too, if among a sensitive, strong-passioned and imaginative race, the number of *sincere* converts to our faith should be so few, when acts like Ffolliot’s can be pointed out as the practices of its members, and the merciless code, that tempts to such and worse, as theirs also?”

“Well, I must own,” said the curate, with more than his usual asperity, “that I can still entertain no sympathy for idolatry, or for the worshippers of the beast, who could besides escape all persecutions at once, by forsaking the path of darkness, and enrolling themselves under the banners of the pure faith. Nay, I am by no means clear, as human inflictions are sometimes requisite to purge from iniquity, whether it would not be better that nine-tenths of the cabins in this benighted land were emptied—ay razed—not a sod left of them, than that the God-forsaken occupants should continue, in their blind wilfulness, to shut their eyes against the light, and wallow in the mire of superstition.”

“You are now, dear Mr. Dixon, speaking under the excitement of argument,” said the rector warmly.

"as I am confident, that, in your cooler moments, you would be incapable of either conceiving, or expressing a sentiment so utterly devoid of charity and at variance (you will forgive me) with the true, mild, and tolerant spirit of Christianity. So we will waive the subject at present, if you please."

They parted soon after, by no means impressed with any increased approbation of each other's sentiments, though the benevolent rector still flattered himself that his curate could not feel the acerbity he had expressed towards his poor countrymen.

Immediately after the departure of his curate, Mr. Gordon set out to visit the cottage, whither he had been preparing to proceed, previous to Dixon's arrival. On his entrance unceremoniously, as was his wont, he perceived there was a slight bustle—a tall man, muffled closely in a large cloak, brushed hastily by him, and Ellen herself met him, with a flushed though tearful countenance.

"I know you have been at prayers, and I have a shrewd suspicion who your companion in prayer was, you little hypocrite," he observed, affecting a jocular tone; "but surely I am not such a bugbear as that my approach should produce flight and confusion. Indeed if it were Mr. Dixon, who has just now left me, caution might be necessary. So as I have come, like some giant or enchanter of the olden time, to bear you off to my castle, I shall, as an additional punishment for your distrust or thoughtlessness, give you but a quarter hour for preparation to accompany me."

Ellen had yielded to the cordial and urgent request of the rector, backed by the earnest entreaty of Frank, he was setting off for the coast two days previously,

that she would spend a month at the glebe; but she now besought him to allow her to remain that day in the cottage, promising that she would be quite prepared the next.

"Giant or enchanter was never more inexorable than I shall be on this point. An hour's further respite you shall not have; and, as I know your entire freedom from all selfishness, I am confident, if you saw the joy that sparkled in poor Maria's eyes when she saw me set out to capture you, you would not seek it. I have not for many months seen her in such spirits as she has been in since you consented to become her companion again, even for so brief a period. Why the day is so beautiful, that I should not at all wonder if she had the 'Zephyr' pushed across the lake, as she threatened to invade us by water, should I make any delay; and, I did waste some time talking to Nancy Loughnan, before I reached the cottage."

While he was talking, "The Zephyr" itself appeared rounding the point, and carrying the young lady and two rowers, one of whom, the quickened pulsation of Ellen's heart told her was Arthur Ffoliot. And he indeed it was. Immediately after Mr. Gordon's departure, he had reached the rectory by a road different from that leading to the cottage, and was instantly enlisted by Maria, to aid in bearing Ellen from the cottage—a service which she was well aware would be far from an unpleasant one to him.

A few minutes more, and the boat was at the beach and Ellen in it, followed by the directions and blessings and remonstrances of Katty; the latter promising at the same time, that the cottage had never

been so cared after as it should be during her absence, "if the words ov an ould colliagh was worth mindin'."

CHAPTER XIII.

ARTHUR and Ellen had not met before since her father's death; and, though their words at meeting now were but few, there was a cordial greeting of hearts. Indeed the tears started to Arthur's eyes and streamed freely from those of the gentle and sensitive girl by whom he was accompanied, to perceive the blighting traces a few days of sorrow and suffering had imprinted on the appearance of the bereaved daughter. He did not, however, venture the expression of his sympathy by words. It was too deeply seated for them—at least for words that should be uttered in the presence of others. Not so Maria: wiping her eyes, she tenderly kissed once and again the brow and cheek of her early companion, and with both her hands grasped in her own tiny fingers, and after the gentlest expression of heartfelt condolence and hope, she forthwith proceeded to exert her fullest powers of liveliness and imagination, to try to wean, even for a while, her friend's mind from those harrowing thoughts and feelings which had, in such brief space, wrought so sad a change. She was well aided, too, in her exertions, by her father, who rallied Arthur again and again on his silence, as the worthy rector, though he perceived that Ellen's society was evidently not unpleasing to the young man, had not the slightest conception of

the absorbing affection that filled the hearts of both. Had he had such conception, and been aware that Arthur's addresses were forbidden by his father, it is probable he would have hesitated to be the means of their meeting just now, little as he esteemed that parent, and great a favourite as Ellen was with him. His daughter, however, was affected by no such scruples.

Mr. Gordon's family consisted of his wife, a kind-hearted woman, and an admirable housekeeper, with four children, of whom the senior by some years was Maria, the rest being indeed little more than infants.

Maria had been of a weakly and delicate constitution from childhood; and that delicacy had increased as she verged towards womanhood. She was now entering into her sixteenth year, and was indeed a tender and fragile flower, but a beautiful one withal. Her figure was small and slight, and, though not angular, it yet wanted that mellowing roundness, which perfects the outline of female symmetry. This, however, a year or two might still produce, were there no other indications in her almost unearthly beauty that gave the beholder cause to fear that an insidious and relentless disease was already gnawing at the core. Rich, dark ringlets of the glossiest and silkiest hue and texture—alas, too silky and glossy for health—fell in clustering profusion over a neck and bosom of that dazzling fairness, seldom seen to accompany a strong constitution, and in which you could perceive the meanderings of the blue veins as clearly as the sunlit streams of a summer landscape. Her features were beautifully formed and wore an expression of great sweetness, and, ever and anon, flitted over her generally pale cheek a rich flush

that, for the moment, put to shame the warmest blush of the rose, though it told not of health any more than the ringlets or the "deadly fair" complexion, while from the depths of her dark eye shot forth a fire too intensely brilliant to remain long on earth. Such she was in person. In mental gifts she was still richer; and, so far, was compensated—as far as such gifts can compensate—for a weakly frame. Her temperament was ardent and exquisitely susceptible—qualities which, to her, were productive of unalloyed gratification, removed as her path had been from the trials and the perils of life. She was completely free, too, from the querulousness so generally attendant on a delicate constitution. Indeed, her spirits were usually of an exuberance completely at variance with weakness of health; and she possessed a highly imaginative mind, and was keenly alive to the beauties of nature and art.

The day was, as we before said, sunny; and cloudless it might be called too, as the odd fleecy cloudlets that occasionally flitted across the sun, served rather to beautifully chequer, by their shadows, the blue bosom of the elsewhere sparkling waters than to produce gloom; and there was in the air that tender warmth we prize and enjoy the more, that it reminds us of the brightness and the beauty that are fading from us. Altogether it was one of those delicious days the decline of the year sometimes brings, as if to make us the more keenly regret the passing away of that season, which can be so beautiful even in its decline. "Ellen," said Maria, as she raised her head from gazing into the transparent waters, "have you faith in the existence of fairies or water sprites?"

Ellen smiled faintly, while Mr. Gordon, with a

simple earnestness that made Arthur laugh, observed "surely, my love, you don't give any credence to such nonsense."

"I'm not too certain of that, papa," she said, shaking her head archly; "but I can't help wishing that I had been living in the times the popular belief was stronger and more general, when, I am confident, I should have been a most sincere believer and, doubtless, rewarded with those visions and communications, which, I fear, our grossness and want of belief have, latterly, almost entirely shut out from us."

"Are you then so anxious to behold those tenants of rath and wave, Maria?" said her father, now jocularly.

"Oh, beyond all things, papa. How often have I strained my eyes, while the delicious summer twilight was melting into night, longing and half expecting to see a troop of tiny elves, emerging in their gambols from our own sweet rath! How often, too, at a later hour, have I lingered on the margin of this lake, endeavouring to conjure up a vision of gentle sprites gliding along the surface of the moon-lit waters."

"Then, why, my love, did you not take into your counsel old Sibby, the fairy woman, who would, doubtless, have obtained for you at once the gratification of your desire?"

"Perhaps, sir," observed Arthur, "Maria wishes to save Sibby's fees, as she, I understand, like the exhibitors of other wonderful creatures, will not give a glimpse of the fairy folk without being well fee'd."

"Arthur, Arthur, you must learn to talk with more reverence of the *gentry*. Recollect that the scene we are moving in at this moment is one of

enchantment, and that, though our dull eye may not be favoured with a glimpse—and one of us certainly deserves it not—the lonely fisherman on those waters often forgets both profit and pleasure to spend hours gazing on the spires and turrets of the enchanted city, that start on his awed and wondering view in the clear depths beneath, and to listen to the unearthly strains that ascend from it.”

“Then, I suppose, Maria,” said her father, “it was for those same spires and towers you were seeking so intently in the lake just now—perhaps, they may even give inspiration to some supernatural, if not immortal stanzas.”

“Alas, for my inspirations, papa! I had little chance of having them gratified while in the company of such utter infidels to fairy lore. But I shall have my revenge; for, as you have openly accused me of versifying, in the presence of my friends, I shall be sure, at a convenient time, to inflict the reading of my fairy ballad on them—that is if dear Ellen will sanction my retaliation.”

Another faint smile was the acquiescent response from Ellen, while tears rushed to her eyes, as the thought arose that, the last time she had been on those waters, her beloved father and herself had held a long discussion on the same fanciful subject.

“And now, my love, if you take as warm an interest in human as in fairy traditions, I suppose you can give us one connected with those dark walls frowning over the lake?” said the rector, with a smile as, after having doubled a point, Castle Bourke appeared in view, flinging its dark shadow on the waters of the opposite shore.

“Indeed, papa, the traditions of our country are so

darkly stained with treachery and blood, that memory loves not to dwell on them, as on the glowing visions of fairy land; and one of the baronial seats of the potent Bourkes, and, above all, the residence of the despotic and relentless son of a bold mother, *Thubbodh na lung* (Theobald of the ship*), must be fertile in dark and fearful traditions."

"They were an extraordinary twain, indeed, to follow in succession," observed her father, "that daring and piratical chieftaness of our shores and her cruel and remorseless son; and their singular career must have furnished one as fond as you, Maria, of records of the olden time, with an extensive stock."

"But, my dear papa, you must recollect that we are all 'native and indued' to those shores and that, of course, every anecdote regarding that widely-famed lady must be known and remembered by all as well as by me. There is, however, a dark tradition of the Bourkes and Bingham in connexion with those walls, which may not been known to all, as it was during the past week I heard it myself for the first time."

"It is new to me, my love," observed the rector.

"And to me," said Arthur.

"Tell it, dear Maria, if it does not fatigue you," said Ellen in reply to a look of her friends.

"If my rattle has not already wearied you, Ellen, I am like one of those untiring birds that seem to

* Theobald of the ship, so called from having been born on board, was the only child by her second husband, the head of the Mayo Bourkes (the first had been O'Flaherty), of the "*Lady of the Isles*," so celebrated in Irish song and tradition, as *Graunia Waille* (Grace O'Malley), the far-famed piratess, so long sanctioned by Queen Elizabeth, for political purposes.

think there can never be enough of their own notes. So now for the legend, which you must allow me to tell in my own way, without daring to laugh at my style or sentiments."

Legend of Castle Bourke.

"It would appear," she began, "that there was deadly jealousy and animosity between those families, though it must have been also, to some extent concealed, about half a century ago—the date tradition assigns to my legend. The Bourkes—who were of those that had become more Irish than the Irish themselves (papa or Arthur will give the Latin expression)—very probably looked all along with an evil eye on the others, whose settlement here did not date for centuries after theirs, as intruders—and, still worse, as successful intruders; while the Bingham, as probably, regarded the high and haughty Bourkes as obstacles to the extension of their authority and domains. Nay, papa, recollect it is agreed on that you are not to laugh at me; and you know I am only giving my own surmises, as I have had no access to the family records of those chieftains.

Well, at all events, according to the legend, there must have been fierce hatred, unbridled power and implacable tempers on both sides, though it would appear there was still visiting intercourse between them.

One day two brothers of the Bingham visited the castle, and the hellish thought sprung up in the mind of the fierce owner to make brief work with the visitors, and cut short further annoyance, by hanging them in front of the castle—a plan which he debated a secret with a murderous agent, while the uncon-

scious brothers were partaking of his hospitality. Brief and secret, however, as the debate was, it was partly overheard by Sally Davoren, one of the maids; and Sally, though she might not care much for the brothers, was desperately frightened for their attendant, Hugh Chambers. So flying at her fastest speed to the scullery, where Hugh was, she beckoned him to her, unseen by her comrades, and—but I must now *do the brogue* for you, that you may see and admire my versatility in narration," she said, laughingly.

"Perhaps you are making time to refresh your memory or invention, my love."

"Oh, disparaging papa!—but you shall see that I require time for neither purpose."

"Sally," said Hugh, "I'll bet a taisther I know what you're thinkin' ov, that makes you so pale an' freckened like. You're thinkin' how near the day it is that mysel' an' my masther 's to set off for foreign parts, an' lave you to cry ochone."

"Ye consated hound, ye—but that day might never come, if I sted listenin' to yer prate."

She imitated the brogue so well in those few words, and looked so archly, that her father could not refrain from laughing: even Ellen was fain to smile.

"Sally then," Maria continued, "whispered to Hugh the terrible intentions of the lord of the castle, and warned him there was not an instant to be lost, as whatever her lord determined on doing he generally did promptly. Accordingly, after having managed to extract the three horses from the stable unremarked by Bourke or his terrible agent, he went forward boldly to where his master was seated with his brother and their courteous host, stating aloud

that one of the horses had become dead lame, contriving, too, to convey to his master, at the same time, in a whisper the warning he had received and the information that the horses were in readiness. A second extended the warning to his brother; and apologizing to the lord of the castle for a momentary absence, they left the apartment—rushed through the door without waiting to snatch their hats—reached their horses—sprung to the saddle and rode for life, followed by Hugh at equal speed, till they reached their own residence.

“Abrupt, however, as was their departure from the castle, and evidently betraying terror and suspicion as it did, it would appear that the Bingham must have convinced their enemies that the real terrible cause was still not known to them, as the tradition concludes that in a few months after three brothers of the Bourkes went by invitation to the residence of the Bingham, when all three, having no friendly warning to give them intimation of their danger, met the same treacherous and terrible doom they had themselves devised for their opponents. And now, papa, I shall close my dark legend by observing that woful—woful, indeed, must have been the state of our humbler countrymen, when such fearful deeds were enacted by their chiefs in the face of day.”

The boat had, by the time the tradition closed, reached the little wharf contiguous to the rectory, and the party was preparing to land, when two horsemen, dashing over an adjacent hedge, rode to the beach. One was Sir Robert, and evidently half intoxicated—early in the day as it still was—the other was Bryan Gaven, his confidential groom and casual companion.

"So my little bird," said Sir Robert, addressing Ellen, "I see you can spread your wings for a flight abroad, heavy as your grief was, when you like your company. But I'll take measures to clip them, and to make your upstart companion, in spite of his epaulettes, stay from Ballintubber—for Mr. Gordon, too, I may find means to teach him whether it's the duty of a parson to bring together those that are forbidden to meet by their friends."

While he spoke he gave his horse the spur, to urge him towards the boat, while his sister, with a suppressed scream, clung to the rector for protection, and Arthur, springing forward in the boat, as if to grapple with the rude insulter. But at this instant a wild cry was heard, and the terrified animal, starting suddenly, pitched its rider heavily on his shoulder; and while the groom was assisting him to rise, the party from the boat passed on to the rectory, Ellen shuddering and clinging closer to Mr. Gordon's arm, as she passed her stunned brother, and Maria exclaiming "the unnatural monster."

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER Harry Gorman had received the dollar from Mr. Gordon, he was proceeding at a fast pace to his cabin, when he was overtaken by a sheriff's officer with a party of dragoons, under the command of serjeant-major Heavisides, on their way thither also.

"Well, you're ready for movin' now. You are, I should think, Muster 'Arry," said the serjeant.

"He was noticed yistherday—wasn't he?" observed the bailiff.

"Well, I think he was to a certainty."

"Thin, without more palaver, out he goes at wanst, *ti at armies*, as 'torney Baker sea, which manes, ov coorse, by law and arms."

"Oh, boys jewel," exclaimed Harry, with an imploring look, and a pathetic earnestness of tone, "for the love o' heaven give us till evenin', an' we'll lave the cabin, with our blessin', and the blessin' o' God on ye."

"Well, I think, we may give the poor hanimal a few hours 'owsomdever," said the serjeant-major, who was really a good-hearted fellow; "as we have to visit the MacHandrews, or Mac'ughs, or some other damned Hirish name—blast such duty, say I. 'Ere's a pull from the canteen, mean time."

"Well, serjeant, that's rale stingo; an' if you have any wish, we can take the misfortunate vagabon' on our road back, as his cabin will be in the way. So let him be off now an' be ready to thramp, bag an' baggage, in a couple ov hours."

"God bless both yer honors; and may ye die an aisy death!" said Harry, as he sped more rapidly than before to his doomed cabin.

"Oh, Sally, my jewel," he cried, as he flung himself panting on the little hammock beside the fire; "we must quit the poor ould cabin afore two hours."

"I didn't think, though we got the warnin', that the black hour ud come so soon," said Sally, who was quieting a restless infant in her arms; "but if it must be, it must be, *a chorra machree*, God's will 's done."

"Well, I'm afeard, Sally *asthore*, I could hardly

say that from my heart this minnit, like a thrue Christian; for it's a poor thing to be thrown to beg on the wide world, without house or home, from where we wor all born, an' thought to die."

"But, Harry agraw, we should always bear in mind that God an' the Vergin, that ever an' always minded us an' ours here, can purvide for us *there* too, though it's more nor we deserve, God forgive us; an' surely we wont be obliged to beg, while we're both sthrong an' healthy, praise be to God an' the saints for id; an' there's the little chilhdren, God help them, small as they are, can do somethin' too."

"Yis, daddy," cried the eldest, a little flaxen-haired thing, with a soiled but lively countenance, running up to him, and catching his knees; "I can pick rishes."

"An' I can gether brooms, ye know, daddy," said her sister, who was about a year younger.

"God bless ye, asthores, an' mark ye with grace," said the half-broken-hearted father, kissing them; "and God bless you too, Sally, for givin' us sich courage. But afther all, it's a cruel thing to be lavin' for ever the ould roof that one was born in-undher, an' his father afore him, an' the poor gor-laghs. Och hone it's little my poor ould father thought (may his sowl rest in glory this day) whin he got his death by helpin' to carry the timber for that loft, the month poor little Pegsy was born, that his misfortunate son, wouldn't be left a stick o' them; an' orou it's little it inthered his mind, the day he finced the black plot abroad, that afore five years ud be past an' gone, none o' those that kem afther him, ud ever get a male from id agin. Thang

God, he didn't live to see this black day, any way—may a meltation hot an' heavy come soon an' suddent on the villian, that's the cause o' lavin' oursel's an' our wake childhren without house or home this day—*aumen a Hyerna.*”

“Don't curse at all, Harry asthore: remimber what Father Bernard sed last week, that cursin' was only doin' harm to oursel's, an' that God himsel' ud be sure to punish, whin he plaised, thim that's hard-hearted to the poor an' disthrest”—the more courageous and confiding, though equally afflicted wife, laid the now slumbering infant on its little hammock, as she continued; “so as there's no good in frettin' an' grumblin', instead o' *that*, let us tighten up the little things we can't do without, while poor little Tommy's asleep.

“Where 'll he have to be sleepin' to-morrow, Sally?”

The big tears gushed freely from the mother's eyes, at the idea of the destitution before her infant, but she wiped them away instantly, saying: “God will purvide a place for him an' for us all. So let us have no more grumblin', but ready the things afore the throopers is back on us. Polly Hannan (God bless her) 'll pay us for the table an' the big box that we can do very well without; and Jack 'll lend us the ass to help to carry the rest. We can go for a week to my uncle Tom's; an' who knows but we'd coax him to take the cow an' calf into the kitchen, and let ourselves have the out-house, till God ud turn up somethin' in our favour, for poor Tom had always a good heart, though he's so close intirely. So, in the name o' God an' the Vergin, do you, a vourneen, go for the
3, an' I'll tighten the things.”

Harry accordingly moved out, and speedily after returned with the ass and creels from his kind-hearted neighbour, who had the good fortune not to be united in the same calamity. The scanty and slight household articles (with a few exceptions) which the cabin contained were then arranged amid occasional bursts of grief and repining from the owner. The arrangement was, however, not entirely completed when the dragoons and the sheriff's officer made their appearance.

"Not ready yet, ye lazy rascal, though we cleared out a dozen since we saw you afore," said the bailiff.

"If you're plaisin' to take a blast o' the pipe we'll be ready with our blessin' afore ye're done," said the bustling wife, reaching over to him, at the same time, Harry's black *dhudeen* (short pipe), well filled.

The hardened official took the pipe, lighted it, and seated himself, while the few remaining articles were speedily packed and arranged.

"'Ere 'Arry I say, blast it, 'ere's 'alf a dollar to 'elp the children and wife," said the good-hearted Heavisides in a whisper, slipping the coin into Harry's hand; "the man 'ant no 'art as wouldn't 'elp a woman and a child."

The arrangement of the ass-creels was now speedily completed. The two elder children were nestled in one, balanced by some rude domestic articles in the other, while the unfortunate mother, bearing in her arms the awakened infant, and on her back a large parcel containing some coarse raiments, yarn and other soft articles, was followed by Harry laden with the "bedding"—their humble bed could be procured wherever they found an asylum for the night.

together with some provisions, and driving before him a pig. And thus departed the ejected family for ever from the roof which, lowly as it was, had hitherto afforded them shelter; their charitable neighbour, Polly Hannan, having kindly purchased the table, box, wheel, and other articles not portable and not indispensable.

When the little procession reached the abbey the ill-fated parents entered it, leaving the children and the animals outside, and remained some time kneeling in prayer on the grave of Harry's father, as he stated with tears and groans his conviction that that was the last time, in all probability, they should ever have the same opportunity.

It was their wild shout of lamentation, after having been joined by some other families in the same predicament, and when they had reached a point that shut out a view of their cabins altogether, that had startled Sir Robert's horse.

"Now," said Mr. Gordon, speaking to his curate, who had returned to the glebe to receive directions respecting matters forgotten in the heat of the preceding argument, as the unfortunate cavalcade was passing close to the glebe, invoking blessings on the worthy rector—"Now, my dear sir, can you wonder, after having witnessed so sad a spectacle as that, that the laws are not respected, and that our creed is not loved?"

"I own, as I said before, Mr. Gordon, that I can have no sympathy for any of their idolatrous creed."

"What has their creed to do with the heartless villainy which has been the means of throwing industrious toilers—ay, even helpless infancy and tottering age—on the world, homeless and destitute?"

"Could they not have abandoned their idolatry and been thus independent of him?"

"And they might, had there been no compulsion. But I cannot too often repeat that I greatly fear our rulers are placing a lasting barrier between the English and Irish, and—what I deem still worse—that they will make the faith we are so anxious to teach and extend an object of hatred, while the creed of Rome will be consecrated in the hearts of my countrymen by persecution. May my fears prove not prophetic."

"You will never see them realized."

"Ay, but may God grant that our descendants shall not have to reap in sorrow the bitter crop we are sowing. Often does a dim, far-off vision rise before me, in which I have glimpses of our church fiercely assailed and maligned, while that we persecute spreads its roots the deeper and wider through the land, for that very persecution."

"It is but a false vision. The mist of idolatry must and shall fly before the sunshine of the pure faith."

The conversation closed, and with it we close this brief chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

AARON ANDREWS and his daughter were seated in the neat and neatly-ordered parlour of the cottage, which almost immediately adjoined the foundry. Before

Bessy was a large and apparently long-used account book, in which, and from which she was occasionally making entries and transcripts.

"Weel, Bess, my girl," said her father, as he indulged in a smoke, while she was arranging the accounts, "ye'll just see that holf a day be stapped fra' Rob Murdock; he came not till work the day till shortly afore the dinner bell."

"Ah, but father, recollect it was the christening of his child that detained him," she observed, as she marked the full amount for the man.

"Then Bessy, woman, 'twill be quite enough to allow holf wages till Owen Carthy, as he has been gangin' hame early on and comin' late the week."

"Surely, sir, there should be considerable allowance made for poor Owen, with a decaying wife and a sickly family—I know, dear father, how little you would yourself be fit to attend business, if your poor Bessy was ailing"—and she flung one hand fondly on his shoulder, while with the other she filled up the amount as before.

"Weel, Bess, I see ye're determined to contradict and ha' yer ain way. But surely ye ha'n't ony thing to say for that ne'er-do-weel, Jamie Naughten, that wasted the Sobboth as usual, in caroosin' and fightin', till he got his croon cracked, and couldn't gang till work on Monday, till long after mid-day. Spak' for *him* noo—con ye?"

"Indeed, dear father, I have a great deal to say for poor Jamie, who though a little wild and thoughtless, is both well-hearted and attached. Why, when you were unwell last summer, there was no man in the concern so regular, or so anxious for your recovery; and when the fire broke out after, he was

the most active among hundreds, in extinguishing it."

"Weel, weel, Bess, woman, I see it's folly to be arguin' wi' ye. So ha' yer ain way, ond gin yer minded t'impooverish yersel', by encouragin' others till idleness, there's nae use in gainsayin' ye, partiklarly, as afore a month, ye'll ha' another to guide ye—a mon o' sense ond substance, though he wears nither a red coat nor a blue—no that serjeant-major Heavisides, is much amiss, for he's a moral mon, wi' some money saved; but I don't fancy the military, and I hope the worthy Mr. M'Nab, who will be on his way fra' Belfast next week, may be as easy till yer hand, my girl, as yer auld father.—Pass on till the weighty accounts—"

"Here, father, is our old friend, Ned Cormack," said Bessy, paling and reddening in rapid alternation, at her father's allusion, "and luckily, in the nick of time, as I fear, looking over the next complicated accounts, wuld increase a slight head-ache, I feel at present."

"Yes, my bloomin' rosebud, here I am," said the old tutor and clerk, entering, "and proud to be able to sarve his mourneen any way.—O, barrin' for the ould boy's bein' here (in a whisper), I'd repate three or four verses I put, last night, to the poem about my rosebud, that ud make Dan Heraghty, the spalpeen, crazy if he only haard them."

"Weel Bessy, don't stoop any more, my lassie, but set a chair for our nibor, ond he'll finish the accounts. But first let's ha' a toothful fra the cupboard, as the evenin's close—that is, gin Ned ha' nae objection;" and Aaron relaxed his features into a slight grin.

"Very well, misther Andrews; never without

your joke an' your sup. But why wouldn't you have them, sir, an' more comfort to your heart with them? My little rosebud knows I haven't a taste ov objection to a *gaulogus* (drink), any time, as dhrinkin' misther Andrews, in my opinion, is always a mighty wholesome divarsion; an' I hope I'm too much ov a ca—Christian I mane, not to take a *cogus* (drink) with an inemy. Yes, misther Andrews, even with Dan Heraghty—No I would not with him, the ignoramus, that doesn't know that the gods themselves like a dhrop, as the poet ses in Latin '*Dii laetantur*'—that's it.—I'm beginning to forget my Latin for want of practice. '*Dii laetantur*'—but I ax your pardon, misther Andrews, I forgot that you don't like Latin quotations, though they're the touch-stone o' thrue larnin', that shows a scholard from an ass."

"I hae sartinly nae relish for yer haithenish gods or quotations, at the same that I doubt na' ould nibor, that you could bring mony a proof that a dhrop o' comfort's guide for the body."

Bessy, having now produced from the dark, polished cupboard, a plethoric bottle more than half full of French brandy, that had never run the risk of being adulterated in a British store, nor submitted to the degradation of paying duty, placed itself, with some glasses, soft sugar and a capacious jug of cold water (her father's favorite mixture with the brandy) before the willing pair, and smiling, as the contrast between them in attire and person struck her (Ned still wore the motly garb described in a former chapter), walked forth into the balmy evening air, leaving the bottle as a substitute for her own society for a while.

Time holds his equal course. Yet how variously is his speed calculated according to the circumstance and feelings of the calculator. How unequal *seems* his flight to the impatient lover, who thinks the briefest day will never close to bring the hour of meeting, and the doomed felon who fancies that hours are condensed into minutes—to the possessor of thousands on his unlooked-for death-bed, who would willingly—how willingly! barter those thousands for a few prolonged days, even days of suffering, and the expectant heir that steals along, with stealthy pace and noiseless foot, to ascertain how long the invalid may still survive—to the blood-stained soldier, elate with victory and burning for the assault, and the outnumbered patriot who awaits, with sublime resolve, to meet the shock he cannot *hope* to withstand, and find his grave in the soil he was unable to defend—to the ambitious and successful speculator, watching eagerly to see his name gazetted in the peerage list, and to him of broken fortune and ruined hopes, who dreads that each succeeding day will see his name announced in the catalogue of ruin. And yet old time alters not his pace to hasten human happiness, or retard human suffering.

The reader will imagine some months to have passed from the period of the events described in the last chapter, to the evening we now introduce him to. Stern winter, had given way to the season of blossom and hope; and the beautiful though capricious spring, had, in her turn, yielded to the ripe and joyous summer. In that interval, the state of the country generally, and of the district we are treating of, in particular, became much worse. Outrage naturally followed the expulsion of the ill-fated peasantry, and

persecution, of course, raged more fiercely. The dragoons scoured the neighbourhood: some of the peasantry were shot! others hanged, after the mockery of a trial, and a few transported, so that the district, apparently awed by those terrible examples, become so completely subdued and peaceable in appearance, that the elder Ffolliot ventured to return to his brother's, to enjoy, as far as conscience would permit, the fruits of his treble-dyed and most heartless treachery.

The present position and circumstances of other prominent characters of our tale we must also briefly advert to.

Time—even the progress of some months—had naturally ameliorated somewhat of the poignancy of Ellen's sufferings, though she still received occasional annoyance from her debased and besotted brother, who was daily sinking more and more in the mire of debauchery, sometimes spending consecutive days abed in a state of constant intoxication, when he was not on the turf, or at the gaming table, while she and Frank had met but rarely and at long intervals, after the period of her visit to the rectory.

Father Bernard remained still in his parish, continuing to perform his sacred functions by night, or in the remote glen, or by the solitary shore, unceasingly risking loss of life or expatriation, and frequently shifting his place of concealment. His nephew had returned to Clare Galway soon after the interment of Sir Edmund, at which period also Frank had returned to the Continent.

The notorious Shawn continued also to pursue his unhallowed vocation, though, of late, success and consequent profits were becoming but very scanty.

He had not disturbed the quiet of his poor sister, nor polluted Ballintubber with his presence for some months previous to the evening we are now treating of.

It was the twilight of a delicious June day; the sun had gone down beneath a canopy of glorious hued clouds which, after having ushered him to the rest, departed and broke into cloudlets of all beautiful tints that, in their turn, separating far and wide, disappeared gradually, like travellers seeking their repose for the night. The air, impregnated with the odours of flowers from her own garden, as well as those borne from hedge and field, was just sufficient to rustle the leaves in the small plantation, on the skirts of which Bessy stood, and slightly curl the stream that flowed at her feet, reflecting, where not shadowed by the trees, the purple tinge that now overspread the western heavens, while the rich and mingled swell of minstrelsy, that had hymned the sun's departure, had now subsided into the occasional delicate strain of an odd bird, better suited to the tender beauty of the hour.

"It is truly a beautiful evening," said Bessy, shaping her thoughts into words audible though not loud, "and yet it makes me somehow sad. It reminds me of the last evening Frank and I met"—she spoke of an evening subsequent to their chance meeting at Ned Cormick's—"different as are the seasons. Poor Frank! if it was now, I think I wouldn't tease him so, as father's words a while ago startled me a good deal; God send he may have spoken at random, without having anything serious in his mind, though I fear he's not likely to speak without *meaning* something. Poor Frank! little he imagine, struggling

with the waves, that I'm thinking of him at this moment. I wish he were returned, whatever be to come."

"And here he is, Bessy my darling, true to his colours, and as ready as ever to stand between you and all annoyance," said the object of her soliloquy, starting forward from the shadow of a tree, and flinging his arms around her.

"Frank Lynch! who could have dreamt of seeing you here this evening, you sea monster? When did you return, and why do you frighten one so?" said Bessy, starting from him, her face suffused with blushes but partially distinguishable in the dimness of twilight.

"Why, some people, to be sure, might be astonished by my presence here now, though I have been in the neighbourhood these three days. But there's one of my acquaintance, at all events," continued Frank, laughing, "that is not ill-pleased, at my return."

"Oh, most probably some one that don't know you well."

"Well, dear Bessy, she's at least a most intimate friend of yours."

"Out upon you, coxcomb, I suppose she took a fancy to your sailors's jacket and saucy face; if she did, she has a taste very different from mine."

"So I should have deemed till this evening, knowing your predilection for scarlet—not blue; but some people change their opinions with great ease; or, as they say, truth lies in a well, some people often confess the truth to *themselves*."

"You are so far beyond redemption, Frank, that words would be wasted on you, and father is waiting

for me. Will you venture in, Frank, to renew your last argument?" she continued archly, in allusion to the last evening of their meeting, when Frank had paid a visit to the cottage, and in the course of which a warm altercation had arisen between himself and her father.

"No, dear Bessy, nor shall you move so quickly after so long a separation." He placed his hand on her shoulder with gentle violence, and, seating themselves on the green sward, whatever were the arguments he used (and we do not pretend that we could not detail them if we pleased, but we never, at any time, had a fancy for playing the spy on such a scene), they parted not till considerably after the long summer twilight had melted into night, and the stars had scattered themselves silently and stealthily, like invading hosts, over the tender blue vault above them.

During this prolonged and, at least to the parties themselves, interesting interview, many circumstances heretofore unintelligible and many apparent causes of doubts and jealousies were satisfactorily cleared up. Bessy told him of the occasional visits of the fat serjeant-major, who, she admitted, was half a favourite with her father, though, to herself, she said, his addresses were but a source of laughter and merriment—a source, however, which Frank told her warmly he would prefer her abstaining from *in futuro*. Another suitor was, however, she said, much more to be apprehended, namely, the son of an old friend of her father in Belfast, with whom he held frequent correspondence, and who was speedily expected to the cottage in the character of a wooer, and one whom her father much affected.

"Then, by the heavens above us!" exclaimed Frank, vehemently, and starting to his feet, "it would be better for him to remain in his own province; for, though he may have your father's sanction, if he persecutes you with his addresses, his journey shall be repented of during his life."

"But my father may compel me to receive his addresses."

"No, Bessy, no father can—shall compel you to act contrary to your inclination and affections."

"A dutiful doctrine, truly, nibor" said the stern voice of Aaron Andrews, as he issued forth from the plantation. "I thought I ordered you afore till keep clear o' those premises. However, I may soon prove that you, at least, my blue jacket—my recusant, or relapsed papist, may be—must act contrary till yer inclinations, by havin' ye made show yer back speedily. As for you, ye forward, gadding hussy, in instantly till yer domestic concerns. I suppose yer head ache's cured noo."

Frank advanced a pace towards the contumelious intruder, fury flashing in his eye; but he was stayed by the word "Frank," uttered by Bessy as she flew, like a frightened bird, towards the cottage, and without speaking, moved along the stream in the opposite direction.

"Ye're right to sheer off in time, my sailor jack-anapes!" shouted Aaron after him; "ond by the God o' my fathers, if ever I find ye till thresspass agin on the cottage grounds, for as high as ye think yer name stonds in this niborhood, I'll send ye on a voyage ye'll no come back from sune, I'll be yer bail."

Frank turned and paused, but he saw that Bessy

had stopped too, and curbing his rage, he pursued his way in a mood of mingled wrath and vexation. He had not proceeded far when a man, springing from a hedge, said, in a muttered tone, "the *boys* is waitin' for ye this hour, masther Frank, an' I was sint to sarch for ye."

"Ha! I had forgotten the meeting," said Frank, "but is that you, Gorman? I thought you were more inclined for home and labour, than for meetings."

"An' that's God's truth for yer honour, masther Frank; an' sure enough so I was, till they didn't lave a house or a home to me or mine; an' wouldn't I go to hell (axin yer pardon, masther Frank) to have revinge on the villian that left us on the *shoughraun*." In fact, Harry had become one of the most daring, energetic, and fierce of the rapparees since the expulsion of himself and family.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE assemblage was not held in the haunted barn on this evening. It was about a lonely and isolated rock on the shore that the violent spirits were congregated; and the subject fiercely agitated, on Frank's entrance, was an immediate attack on Ffolliot's house, as there was a rumour that the elder Ffolliot, then resident there, was about to proceed to England early in the next month.

"There's not one among you, my friends, believe me, more anxious to see vengeance done on the old

Cromwellian than I am," said Frank, on being appealed to on his entrance, as the leader of the projected attack.

"An' raisin good ye have, masther Frank, af ye knew but all," said *Thummaush beg* (the rapparee before alluded to); "as the ould haithen said no later than yistherday, in my own hearin', that he had his eye on ye, an' knew well ye wor a smuggler an' ud sind ye speedily over the herrin' brook for id."

A dark red flush, like that of the thundercloud, swept across Frank's weather-embrowned features, as he rejoined, with forced calmness, "I may give him the first voyage. But if I am to have the leading of the attack, as we arranged, Isaac Ffolliot is to be delivered up to me with his timbers undamaged if possible; and I will guarantee to place him where he shall never do further injury, and have full leisure to repent of his villainy; and there shall be harm done to none else in the house, and no bloodshed whatever unless in self-defence."

"Masther Frank's too tindher-hearted entirely," said *Thummaush*, fiercely. "By the 'ternal, af the threacherous ould hell-bird had twenty lives, af there was no wan barrin' mysel', I'd tare him out ov his heart—when did the bluddy villain himsel' show marcy or justice?"

"There was a low, fierce burst of applause as Harry observed, "No, *Thummaush*, you mustn't middle or make with him. The merciless ould villian's life belongs to me."

"Didn't he rack me as well as he did yoursel'?"

"Speak lower and cooler, my lads; these rocks may have ears," said Frank. "Am I not about to

give you bitterer and more lasting revenge than the taking of a worthless life, by leaving him to spend his remaining years in a dungeon without friend or messmate, and with fear and remorse eating, like vermin, into his timbers, every watch in the twenty-four. You hear my terms," he continued, "and the only terms on which I will either join, or bring any of my lads to join in the attack."

"Captain Frank's right," said Fergus, "an if we can get our revinge without firin' a shot, so much the better. I would advise ye, too, to be cool an' cautious, as there might be thraitors among the loudest ov oursels"—he fastened his gaze full on Thummaush, whom he had been sternly watching throughout the evening; and his suspicions were strengthened by the starting of the former on hearing the last words, and would have been still further confirmed, did the tender starlight enable him to distinguish the change of countenance that accompanied the start, though the intended betrayer replied boldly and promptly "Fergus speaks quietly bekase the murdherin' ould thief didn't murder *him*."

"Man," exclaimed Fergus, laying his hand fiercely on the shoulder of Thummaush, "who dhrove me to be what I am, an' parsecuted my poor ould father that was a scholard an' paceable? No wan here knows better than you, Thummaush; an' yer talkin' in that bould, wicked way wont prove ——"

"Then," interrupted Frank, "if my conditions be agreed to, our attack will be on next Thursday night, if his old hull can't be *quietly* captured before then."

"Be the holy," swore Thummaush, "we'll not

wait till Thursday, to let the ould villian get off, may be."

There was a buzz of approbation as before, till Frank rejoined, "I can tell ye, lads, more about Ffolliot's Grove than ye seem to know yerselves. Three officers and a servant have anchored there this evening, and are to remain in the same moorings till Thursday."

After some further remarks and fierce oaths on the part of Thummaush, it was then arranged that the party should meet for the attack in their present locality, on Thursday evening, speedily after sunset; and the assemblage separated.

It was after frequently pausing to watch, and stealthily crossing and creeping beneath the shadow of hedge and ditch that Thummaush found himself, at about a miles distance from the place of rendezvous, in company with Shawn na Soggarth, who had been awaiting his approach.

"An' is it put off till Thursday? So much the betther," said Shawn, after having received the sought information.

"Yis, that visit o' the officers sarved us well. We'll now have plinty o' time for the throopers, though I swore like a Trojan through thick an' thin (an' nearly got myself thrappled (throttled) for my pains be that powerful villian Fergus), that the fun ud be spilet, af the attack wasn't to-night.

"An' ye played yer cards well intirely, Thummaush, as ye ever more did; an' I'll make Sir John make this night's work worth yer while," said Shawn; "but take care not to get yoursel' *more* suspected, an' yit to have an eye like a malthouse

rat till Thursday. I must be off to head quarters, where I know they're waitin' for me."

"But, Shawn, what do ye say raily I am to get?" asked Thummaush, eagerly, as he grasped his vile companion's collar. "Ye know it's a dirty an' a dangerous job I'm on—af ye wor to see the eyes o' Fargy jist now on me, ye wouldn't give a thraneen for my life."

"I tould ye inready," said Shawn, loosening the grasp and moving off rapidly, "that I'd make Sir John pay ye well for yer sarvices. But it's time enough to be thinkin' o' that whin I git my own reward first; an' I can't stay any longer palaverin with you while they're waitin' for me at the castle," he concluded, shaking himself entirely free from the grasp of Thummaush and dashing off without further ceremony, confident that his vile associate had now gone too far to dare attempt retracing his steps, and that besides, he owed Fergus deadly enmity.

"An' the treatment I deserve sure enough for my information. The divle pity me af there was an eye on me this minnit," said Thummaush, bitterly, as he gazed a moment after his colleague. "But I might soon be even with Masther Shawn by tellin' the whole matther to Fargy yit—to Fargy! No, by the—— af I was to lose my life over again, as well as the reward, by id I'll go on with my revinge agin *him*."

And an eye—and the eye he most hated and feared there had been on him, as Fergus, who utterly distrusted him, had tracked his suspicious movements, till baffled by a thick hedge not far from the meeting place; and the result of that observation he was

speedily to experience, though he was allowed to deem himself unobserved for this night.

As fast as the thirst to communicate his intelligence and the hope of obtaining the consequent reward could lend him speed, Shawn hastened to unfold to Sir John whom he chanced to find—to the doubling of his reward—in deliberation with the man on whose house the attack was to be made ; and it was speedily arranged that half a dozen picked dragoons should be stealthily conveyed to Ffolliot's Grove for its defence against the attack, while half a troop should be ambushed in its neighbourhood, to cut down or capture the rapparees during the attack.

Accordingly, ere two hours had elapsed after the information had been received, the men were stationed unperceived in Ffolliot's, where they were to remain, of course, in concealment, till the attack. The remaining horsemen intended for the dispersion and capture of the rapparees could not be placed, that night, in the dwellings of Sir Robert and Andrews (the places intended for their ambush), as there would be too great a risk that some of the menials in either place would, in the long interval till the intended period of the attack, find means to convey warning of their arrival to the rapparees. They were accordingly in the saddle shortly after noon the ensuing day, and set forward publicly, as if escorting as prisoner a disarmed comrade placed between their files. They moved forward slowly and made several halts, as if careless what hour they should reach their destination with the prisoner. They moved forward, too, by Sir John's directions, with apparently reckless jollity and unsuspicion ;

bandying jests, carolling and cursing occasionally, though every eye was wary, and every hand prepared to instantly grasp its weapon, as they knew not how many eyes were watching their movements, nor could tell from behind what hedge might commence an attack on them. This watchfulness might have been spared, however. No attack was contemplated, as it, of itself, would have defeated the very object of the rapparees' plan to come into contact with the military at all, whatever its result; and the appearance of the prisoner, with the manner of the march altogether, prevented even Fergus, the most watchful of the rapparees, though he followed the route for some miles, from cherishing any suspicion of the real object of the party, particularly after the clatter of the horses' hoofs had died away far beyond the residences of Sir Robert and Ffolliot, towards which a single rider had never, apparently, turned eye or thought. But when the party had reached some three miles further, the words "halt—dismount" were given; and each dragoon instantly leading his horse over a low hedge and into a near hollow not discernable from the road, the animals were supplied with the provender carried for them. The men, too, were immediately after seated on the grass, enjoying the contents of haversack and canteen; and here they remained till after sunset, when, the horses being left to the care of the pretended prisoner, the party set out for the cottage as their nearest destination, whence the section appointed to ambush in the hall could be despatched there.

They moved in single file, closely muffled in their ample cloaks, and with some yards between each man, under the guidance of one of the party, who

knew the locality well ; and a distressing march, short as was the distance, it proved to the men who, with the incumbrance of cloak, and arms, and heavy boots, were obliged to clamber over wall and ditch, and jump across or wade through an occasional bog-drain ; besides, that their pace was quite unequal, as though they moved slowly and cautiously, while under the shelter of wall or hedge, they were obliged to traverse rapidly the open grounds in their path, in order to get as fast possible out of the range of observation ; for which object also their helmets had been left with the horses, to their comrade's care, and foraging caps assume in their stead.

It was, indeed, a ludicrous sight, to see the panting and perspiring Heavisides, who commanded a division of the party, rolling himself over hedges, forcing himself by sheer "weight of *flesh*" through the single stone walls, or borne over ditches on the back of a stalwart dragoon, as his Falstaff-like "alacrity for sinking," made it hazardous to leave him to his own exertions in crossing ; and despite the caution they were bound to observe, the two nearest of the party were several times constrained to burst into low laughter, as they saw him gathering himself up from his frequent slidings and rollings. Except for those trivial mishaps, however, the party reached its destination without the slightest accident. And slender was the welcome for them from Aaron, when they did arrive. He muttered something to the serjeant about every man's house being his castle ; that no one had a right to turn the cottage into a barrack without his consent, and that he did not fancy incurring suspicion and danger for any man. He was proceeding to add that the whole

savoured of some heathenish proceeding, which he was bound to oppose, when, placing her hand on his mouth, Bessy whispered him, not to provoke the wrath of Sir John and Ffoliot for a temporary inconvenience, for which he had no remedy.

"Begone till yer room, forward hussy. Hoo daur ye be seen in such a place—ye'll ha' nae disrelish till sogers, I daur swear. But Samuel M'Nab will be here the morrow, ond, by the God o' Abraham, before the sun gangs doon I'll put a barrier for ever between ye ond soger or sailor."

With a face crimsoned deeply as a summer sunset by this rough address, Bessy retired from the presence of the speaker: the latter followed her, after having bestowed a glance indicative of anything but liking, on the serjeant and party, though he had sufficient self-restraint, to refrain from offering further opposition to their remaining for some hours in the cottage. And, even as it was, it was well for him that his Protestantism was so well established, that he was known to be in high favour with Sir John, and that the serjeant-major was friendly, or fearful might have been the vengeance wreaked on him and his, for his having dared to demur at all, as it is easy to conceive that, in such a state of society, there was impunity for almost every military crime and excess. Indeed, one of the dragoons, after damning his own eyes with great heartiness, suggested that a good cut over the head would make the old chap a damn deal less saucy. But this Heavisides interdicted most energetically, stating that he would positively report for insubordination whosoever should even hint at injury to any inmate of the cottage.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE men now moved forwards for Lynch Hall with even more caution than they had used in approaching the cottage, as they were now much nearer the raparees, whose place of rendezvous for the night was, however, in quite an opposite direction to their route from the cottage. This party was under the guidance of a corporal, the serjeant-major preferring to remain at the cottage, because, as he stated, it was nearer the place of the intended attack. Shortly after the departure of his comrades he was debating in his mind some important considerations—considerations suggested by Aaron's previous words and his own opportunities that night, which might not recur again for some time. But how was he to obtain a private conversation with Bessy in the temper her father was now in, and speedily too, as he could not, of course, tell at what moment he should be compelled to move from the cottage? Should he endeavour to cajole the father into better humour, that he might be enabled to convey a whisper to the daughter? He had reached this point in his cogitations when he felt his shoulder tapped, and, looking up, beheld Bessy herself muffled in a large shawl. She beckoned him to the door, without speaking, and, pointing towards the gable remotest from the party, and which was shadowed by a full-grown lime, glided before him to its shelter; and, after an instant's pause, he followed her, telling the men that he should be with them in a few moments, though he felt some mis-

givings that he might be running the risk of having the presence of the party discovered by his movement. But in the mood he was then in, except for the circumstance that he owned no world to lose, the old performance of "all for love; or, the world well lost," would have been enacted over again.

"A riglar sly un is the serjeant-major," observed a dragoon: "I'll be d——d if he a'nt gone to court the purty wench as was 'ere just now."

"He coort! he knows as much about coortin as he does ov jumpin over a boghole, or as my mother's ould cow does ov a holiday," rejoined another.

"Blast my eyes," said a third, "if I sha'nt 'ear their talk any how—they're only at yonder tree."

"Haud mon an' dinna spoil sport," said his comrade, laying a hand on his collar; "ye wadna loik in yer ain luvemakin' to be spied on, an' what for suld ye intherfere noo wi' anither; ond the serjeant-major's no a bad fallow ofther a'."

"Sandy's right," said the first speaker, "let the 'uge seal 'ave his sport now; and damn my eyes but we'll hextract summut o' the fat when we get back to quarters."

The first glimpse of the troopers had suggested to Bessy's mind proceedings in which Frank was like to be implicated, and which would, of course be fraught with risk and danger to him; and she resolved at once to worm out from the serjeant the plan and intentions of the party. With this object she had enticed him to the present meeting, profiting, for a few moments, of her father's having betaken himself to his bible, to keep down thoughts of vexation and strife.

"Well Bessy, my hangel" said the love-swayed serjeant-major, on reaching the tree, "the old un's in

precious hill 'umour to-night, if he really means wot he says."

"I fear he means it as the most serious earnest," she rejoined in a tone, the sadness of which Heavisides mistakenly placed to his own account, for the words and tone of her father weighed heavily on her heart, though the poor serjeant-major had no place in her thoughts in reference to the matter.

"Cheer hup your little 'art, my hangel, or, as the queerish hold feller calls you, my sweet rose bud, for as sure as a bullet's made o' lead we'll houtdo the hold boy still. It'll be a story to tell indeed if a bold dragoon and a woman can't sarcumwint a hold uncks any day, howsomedever rumbustos."

"Remember, serjeant-major Heavisides, you are talking of my father; but what I wished to learn from you is what duty you're on to-night. Is it a dangerous service?"

"'A, my hangel, hanxious for my safety! Well I like you the better for that, and sure it's nat'rel too. But honner—duty—a secret hexpedition—might be discovered—mustn't tell you for a couple of hours—breach of discipline—reduced to the ranks—court martial—can't indeed.'"

"Surely you cannot think I would desire to bring all this injury on you."

"No, no, but women, you know, is never reckoned the best at keeping a secret, and you'll be sure to know all in the course of the night without hanny danger."

"Then I have no further business here;" and she made a step towards the door; but, grasping her gently by the arm, he said, "No, my little rose bud, you're not a goin' so easy after all the plans I was a

layin' to 'ave a meetin', so let us purseed at once to settle our own affairs while the hopportunity lasts, and little time enough we 'ave for it, surely. Bessy," he continued, after a second's pause, "I'm a thinkin' if the hold un was to marry you in earnest to that ere feller as he says is to be 'ere in the morning, and wot's as hugly as a naiger, I'll be sworn, it would surely break your little 'art, and give me a wopper as I'd 'ave no relish for, no how. So why should we be separated and made miserable for hanny feller, when we 'ave this very night so beautiful a hopportunity of balking 'em all. Do you, then, my hangel and my love, pack up some clothes and anything else valuable as you care for, and before we sleep parson Joiner, our chaplain, 'll 'ave us buckled, and then we may laugh at father and naiger." He chucked her confidently under the chin as he concluded, "Besides, when the job's once complete, I 'ave hinterest enough with the captain and Sir John to get 'em to make all square with the old feller again, as was halways fond of me, when we can hintirely leave the harmy to 'elp him in the business; or he can purchase a commission and make you a hofficer's lady, wot ud be the hagreeablest, as surely the sound of trumpets and drums would be more pleasanter than the sound of 'ammers and wheels."

It was with much exertion that Bessy had been enabled to restrain her struggling laughter during this modest and disinterested proposal, in the course of which the serjeant was obliged to pause for breath three or four times, though, fortunately, the tender summer starlight did not allow her wooer to observe the expression her countenance wore; and she now rejoined in a tone of great affected gravity, with-

drawing her arm at the same time, "may I ask, Mr. Heavisides, what part of my conduct has induced you to think I would act a part so unbeseeming a maiden as to quit my father's house and matchmake against his consent?"

"There's nothing in your person or conduct, my hangel, wot doesn't cause me to hadmire you more and more; and I only made the hoffer for the 'appiness of us both, and to show that my haffection was a-burnin' for you fiercer after wot I 'eard from the old un."

"The affection, indeed, of a man that hasn't even confidence enough in her, that he pretends to have his heart, to tell her the service he is on for the night."

We shall pursue the dialogue no further. The serjeant-major was completely in the toils. But a few minutes more elapsed until he had communicated to her all he knew of the intended proceedings for the night, in return for her feigned compliance with his arrangement, that she was to join him after the affray should have terminated, for which purpose he was, by her own request, to provide her with a cloak for concealment, as she herself could obtain a cap. Accordingly she was speedily supplied with the smallest cloak among the party—in fact all the cloaks were to be left in the cottage till the termination of the business—and immediately after, muffled in the cumbrous cloak, and with the cap slouched over her face, the courageous girl, sliding from a low gable window, moved forward stealthily and unperceived by the dragoons towards the bend of the shore, where she knew the rapparees were frequently in the habit of assembling. She moved at first but slowly, of

necessity; but when she had gained some distance from the cottage, sustaining the skirts of the cloak on her arms, she continued her motion as fast as the light and the ground would permit her. She felt but little apprehension in approaching the haunt of lawless men, as she knew that her father had never made himself obnoxious to them, and they had never attempted to harm him or anything that was his; and were there in reality some risk, she would not have hesitated to incur much higher, in her present excited mood, to convey to Frank, whom she was certain she would find among them, the knowledge of what was prepared for him.

And Frank she did meet, as she cautiously approached the shore; he was leaning against a rock at some distance from where the band was assembling fast, with his head bent and arms folded, as if in a chafed or thoughtful mood. He did not perceive her, as recognizing him, she advanced with light and stealthy step till, tapping him on the shoulder, she said in an assumed voice, "Surrender yourself or you die!"

Then, starting from his recumbent posture, and his practised eye perceiving the horseman's cloak even in the imperfect light, he rapidly snatched from his breast a pistol, and was in the act of putting his finger to the trigger when, bursting into a low laugh, she observed in her natural voice, "Spare your powder, gallant captain, you will soon have worthier objects for it, though you might, perhaps, earn increased fame by shooting a woman."

"Good heavens! is it you, Bessy—and why here at this time?"

Without further wasting the time which she knew

to be now so precious, she informed him, as she led him somewhat further from the place of rendezvous, of the troopers' ambush and its object, beseeching him earnestly, at the same time, to have no participation in the attack, and revealing, by admission and implication, the terms on which she had obtained the information, as well as her father's intentions for the morrow.

"Well, my sweet Bessy," observed Frank, when her communication closed, "as you are proving our preserver to-night, you must not make miserable a life you have been the saviour of; and though you will, I trust, quit your father's house to-night, it will be under the sailing orders of one who feels a warmer and more disinterested affection for you than the speculating, lowlived trooper."

On a former occasion we boasted we were no eaves-dropper, to spy out and gossip of the proceedings of lovers in their stolen interviews; and though we could guess shrewdly at the further arrangements in the present instance, we shall, in order to sustain our character, drop the curtain here, barely recording that vain were her tenderest and most earnest entreaties to dissuade him from accompanying the party that night.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SHORTLY after the interview between Frank and Bessy, the former approached the rapparee meeting with rapid strides and gloomy brow.

"We are betrayed boys," he muttered; "the soldiers are in our wake at this moment, and we must keep a sharp look out, every knot we run to-night."

"Yis, there's a thraitor among us an' I knew id all along," growled Fergus, fixing his fierce and vengeful gaze on Thummaush, who quivered like a sapling in the breeze; "but he'll not enjoy the reward ov his thraison this night"—and seizing the trembling betrayer, who vainly invoked heaven and earth to witness the falsehood of the charge, he pinioned his arms with a rope speedily supplied and, by Frank's directions, placed him between two of the ablest and best armed of the rapparees, with directions to stab him to the heart, should he attempt to escape from their companionship.

Immediately succeeding this occurrence among the rapparees a loud shout, as of pain and terror, was heard in the neighbourhood of the cottage; and, moving forward cautiously to the near hedge, whence the cry proceeded, two of the dragoons discovered an armed man struggling to rise while another was visible moving fast away. Seizing the former who attempted no resistance, and uttered no further cry, they conveyed him to the cottage, where they perceived that he bled from a wound in the cheek, however and by whomsoever inflicted; and on questioning him as to its cause and his appearance then and there, he stated with somewhat of reluctance, but without any apparent fear, that he was one of the rapparees who, repenting of his intended part in the night's proceedings, had endeavoured to steal away from his companions, as they began to move forward; but that, having been observed, he

had been pursued and assaulted by a comrade, as he approached the cottage. He also stated that the rapparees were proceeding to attack the house of Mr. Dixon the curate, which was about two miles from Ffolliot's, before they should proceed to the latter.

"Muster Paddy, you're come to us comically," said Heavisides, "and you're tellin' us quite the contrary to our hinstructions; and still you may be as true as steel. But if you're a hangin' out false colours and a leadin' us a wrong route, by 'eaven you shall 'ave steel and lead in your stomach together."

"An' what else should I expect, barrin' that I'm not afeard in regard to spakin' the truth," said the unabashed rapparee; "and let yer honour an' the sogers come with me at wanst to the island park beyant, an' quarther me afther shootin' me if I don't show ye the boys marchin' to'ards the curate's."

After a moment's consultation among the dragoons in regard to this new information, it was resolved to accept the rapparee's proposal. Accordingly, leaving their cloaks and scabbards in the cottage, and having examined the priming of their pistols, they set forward for the locality designated the island park; the rapparee being placed, for security, between the two front men of the party, and the serjeant in the centre big with the idea, after having ascertained that Bessy was absent from the cottage, that she was waiting to join him.

On reaching the hedge adjoining "the park" the rapparee coughed violently twice or thrice, when the an in his rear placing the sword to his back, and in front wheeling round and putting another to

his throat, both exclaimed together, "Cough again and the steel's in your guts, villain."

"*Be the husth*, don't spake at all, but lain agin the hedge, an' thry what ye'll see betune ye an' that bright star fornint the wood."

The word to rest against the hedge passed along. It was obeyed, and troopers saw distinctly in the starlight, a considerable body of men, moving in the direction stated by the guide, and at somewhat less than a hundred yards distance.

"Let us cut the dogs down at once," said a trooper.

"No, no," exclaimed Heavisides, "we'll play no such a game. Our orders are to ketch 'em in the hattack, besides that, we might only get ourselves into a mess, if we attacked 'em with 'alf our number. But do you, Brown, as you know these 'ere parts best, 'urry at the best of your speed to Sir Robert's and tell the men to 'asten hinstantly, and a quick trot, to Mr. Dixon's, where they'll meet us."

His orders were promptly obeyed, and within about a quarter mile of the curates, his party was joined by their comrades and Brown.

But while the dragoons were thus vigilant in their pursuit of the rapparees, the latter, on whom none of their movements had been lost, leaving a few of their number to keep the pursuers still on the false scent, doubled about at a convenient opportunity and speedily gained the vicinity of Ffolliot's Grove.

Neither Frank nor Fergus was aware that any troopers were stationed in the house; whether it was that Heavisides himself was ignorant of the fact, or had forgotten to mention it to Bessy, or that she had

omitted to reveal it to Frank in the agitation of her mind, so that they approached the house, which seemed buried in sleep and silence, carelessly.

"There's the room the ould imp o' hell used to sleep in," whispered Fergus, pointing to a gable window which overlooked a thriving plantation; "an' if we could open it quietly, we might have our inds ov him without alarmin' the throopers at all."

"Ay, but I know the old scoundrel is possessed of bull-dog courage," rejoined Frank; "and as he's never without having his guns well shotted, I fear, were he to be roused, the first that entered would be certainly sent to Davy's locker."

"Pho, masther Frank, sure none ov us id be afear'd o' the ould hell bird, if he had twinty guns," muttered Fergus.

"But surely, masther Frank, it's me that has the best right to lay the first hands on him," said Gorman, eagerly.

"We must be more cautious and try our soundings better first," said Frank—"who knows the bearings of the house best?"

Some ten or a dozen of the party were now standing in front of the gable, and close to a well-grown sycamore; and their motions and position had been well watched, and ascertained, notwithstanding the tender light of the hour, and the deep stillness that seemed to reign about the house; for, before Frank could receive an answer—through some openings prepared in the window, but which they could not perceive from abroad—half a dozen heavily-loaded muskets and pistols were discharged by them, by the effects of which Fergus was slightly wounded in the shoulder, and another of the party fell, with a shriek

of agony, having received balls in the thigh and breast.

"Back to the trees, men!" shouted Frank, "and drag the body with you."

Then, applying to his mouth a small whistle, concealed beneath his breast, he blew a shrill blast, immediately after which three seamen, armed with pistol and cutlass, placed themselves beside him.

"Come on again, cowardly rascals—haven't ye got a warm reception? Come on again, and we'll give you a hotter dose," shouted Isaac Ffolliot, in a loud, fearless, jeering tone; for, truth to tell, though Sir John had pressed strongly on him that, as the attack was intended exclusively for him, he had better remain at the castle for a day or two, he utterly—fiercely refused to be absent even for an hour from the scene of danger, notwithstanding that his brother (the proprietor of Ffolliot's Grove) chose to remain in attendance, as he stated, on his son, the Cornet, who might have been reasonably expected to be the leader of the defending party, but who had been confined to bed for the last three or four days; and throughout the perilous hour of the attack, he exhibited a daring and fearless courage, that might have done honour to a better man.

Frank had, however, caught sight of the trooper's uniform during the flashing of the volley, and he exclaimed, "Stir not boys from your shelter; we are strongly opposed, and spare your powder (speaking to the seamen about him) till ye have something to fire at!"

Some dropping shots were now exchanged, after the fashion of Indian warfare, as the dark outlines of the rapparees showed themselves now and then from

behind the trees, and the flashes from within revealed, occasionally, the figures of the defenders. The effect from those was, that one of those attackers was killed and two severely wounded, while it was evident that two of the dragoons were seriously injured within, the sound of two bodies falling heavily inside, having immediately succeeded the first discharge by Frank and the seamen.

"This is all flummery, we'll get in at the windy or lose our lives!" exclaimed three of the infuriated rapparees, armed with rusty sword, pike, and pitchfork, and rushing forward furiously at the same moment. But they had scarcely emerged from the trees when all three were stretched, one mortally, and two seriously wounded.

A wild cry for revenge arose from the diminished band; and Frank, now greatly excited, exclaimed, "We are playing a bad game, boys! the party abroad must have heard the firing, and will bear down on us speedily, so that something must be done at once, that is, if you think it worth while to risk more lives for the possession of a worthless craft."

"Revenge on Ffoliot!" rung wildly through the night air, in reply.

"Then I will stand by you while there's a plank left; but we must change our tack, and steer from this exposed position. Scatter, boys," he continued, after a moment's pause; "let one division try the front of the house with myself and the boys of the Swallow, and another attend the rere, while a few must remain in their present moorings, to keep up the attention of the dragoons; and let them be cautious, too, as they know their danger now. If we succeed not in a few minutes our sail must be

hoisted, as it would be madness to await the attack of the united dragoons. Let us move forward then, and three gold pieces to the first man that sets foot on the enemy's deck, unless it should be myself."

The attackers now dashed forward with another wild shout, by far the largest portion moving to the rear, and the seamen, with a few daring associates, rushing to the front. In both points, however, they were completely foiled; the doors and windows were so strongly barricaded, as to resist all attempts to force them; while the defenders, having separated, too, showed by some shots, though ineffectual, that they were prepared to meet the changed system of attack in all directions.

But although the attack failed on these points, its object was attained elsewhere, though certainly not in the manner Frank had wished for, or calculated on. When the rapparees divided, Harry and Fergus, with two or three others, remained watching the gable window where Ffolliot still continued, with a couple of aids, conscious that, if left for a moment undefended, it would prove the most dangerous point of attack.

"See, how the ould villian glories in all the blood spilt on his account to-night, beside all his other villiany," said Harry to his companion, as a flash showed the form and features of Isaac, still at his post, and with arms in his hands; but, Fergus, if you'll back me, live or die, a plan sthruck me, that'll give us our revinge on the spot, whatever happens afther, as I'm sworn never to lave this alive till I have id."

"I'll back you to the last gasp," rejoined Fergus, clutching his hand.

"Thin lave the boys an' folly me; an' whin we get undher the windy, as I know the ould villian's station, if you'll let me mount on yer shoulders, it'll go hard if I don't reach his heart with this," alluding to the formidable weapon he carried, namely, some nine inches of a sword blade, with point and edge exceedingly sharp, affixed to an ash handle nine feet in length.

Accordingly, moving cautiously through the trees till they reached the boundary wall to the rear, and thence creeping noiselessly, close by the gable, they reached the spot beneath the window without having attracted the observation of those within. A moment more and Harry was mounted on the broad shoulders of his companion, by which means his hands were nearly on a level with the window; and, while he was held in this position by the powerful hands of Fergus, and with well-poised aim, darting forward his terrible weapon with all its force, the blade was buried up to the hilt in Ffolliot's side, who fell with a groan, as he was in the act of presenting his piece at one of the rapparees that had emerged from a tree, to ascertain whether the figures beneath the window were friends or foes.

"Hurrah!" shouted Harry, when he found his weapon had reached his hated oppressor. But the shout only proved his destruction; for, as he sprung from Fergus' shoulders, the dragoon that still remained at the window, turning the muzzle of his pistol downwards, drove a brace of bullets through his neck and shoulders. He staggered forwards a few paces and fell noiselessly, but as lifeless as his victim.

"This is the divle's own night's work intirely,"

muttered Fergus, as he bore the body back by the same route by which they had approached the window.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE parties in front and rear of the house had, as was before said, been utterly foiled; and the report of a few shots in the distance now announced that the party of dragoons abroad, having become aware of their position, and, summoned by the firing, were approaching.

"This has been an unfortunate night's business, and one I little reckoned on," said Frank; "and the sooner we spread our canvas now the more useless risk we shall avoid, as the dragoons will reach us speedily, I know from the direction of their shots."

"Let us have a parting whack at the ould villian, captain, jewel, afther all he cost us, if 'twas only for poor Ned's sake," eagerly exclaimed a rapparee, whose brother had been severely wounded in the attack.

"Ffolliot is done for any how," said Fergus, who had just joined the party in front. "Afhur all the loss the ould villian cost us, poor Harry Gorman put his blade through him, though he lost his own life by id—God help unfortunate Sally whin to-morrow comes."

"Then," said Frank, earnestly, "we have neither time nor business to remain an instant longer—hark to that." The report of a pistol was heard sharply in the direction of the hall, so as to prove that the

drawer of the trigger was at no considerable distance from them.

Frank now again applied the whistle to his mouth, and moved with his companions to the rear, as well to unite with the party there, as because it afforded the most sheltered way of retreat, he said in a low but earnest tone: "Now, boys, let us scatter instantly—and I wish heartily we had not come at all to-night—as, from the direction the party is coming in to avoid them, we must pass within range of the arms from the gable again, and the more sail we carry the better."

"We'll give them light to know their friends by, any how, by the 'ternal, if the divle was at the back door," swore the rapparee that had before spoken.

Entreaty to him to desist, and not further endanger the lives of himself and others, was useless. He clambered over a wall, with the position of which he seemed to be well acquainted; and, with the desperate man, it was the work of a few minutes to fly across an adjoining field—overcome the slight fastenings of a cotter's cabin—snatch a half-burned coal from the hearth before the terrified occupants could recover breath to accost him—retrace his path—with a powerful effort burst open the door of an outhouse, used as a wool-store, and, blowing the coal for an instant, lay it on the heaped wool. The inflammable material instantly ignited; the fire spread smoulderingly for a moment—then the flames rose—burst through the door and fastened on the board windows, which were instantly in a blaze. They chanced, too, to be adjoining to the wool-store a pile of laths and boards intended for some addition to the

rear of the house; and, the fire communicating with these, a rushing and a roaring flame rose at once, with a burst of terrific grandeur into the night air, contrasting fearfully with the tender light of the summer heaven all around.

"Hurra!" wildly exclaimed the rapparee, as he gazed on his work for a moment, previous to following his retreating comrades.

There had been but a few random shots, as was before observed, in the front or rear of Ffolliot's Grove, as the defenders would not venture to expose their persons, by placing themselves in a position to fire effectually at those beneath, and they were too few in number to venture sallying out on their attackers. But when the figures of the retreating rapparees were discovered, by the flame light, moving through the plantation, which they should necessarily pass in order to avoid the approaching dragoons, a volley was fired at them by all the efficient defenders. The consequence of this discharge was that Frank was grazed in the arm and Thummaush beg (who had been strictly watched through all the danger and turmoil of the hour, and preserved, more than once, by Frank, from meeting his death from three or four of the party when they saw their companions falling) received a wound in the leg, though their positions were quite different, as Frank and the seamen were entirely in the rear, while Thummaush was considerably in advance, in front.

"Lave the threacherous villian to his friends," said Fergus, shoving him with his foot, as Thummaush sank down unable, or affecting to be unable, to move on; "an' if they mistake him for a throe

man an' give him the steel, it'll be just payment for him."

"What!" said Frank, moving up rapidly, "if he be what you suspect, do you want to have the enemy piloted into every secret creek and haven of yours, before you would have time to trim a sail? Besides as yet we have no positive proof of his treachery, and we should recollect that he must feel pain as acutely as any of us. Tow him on, then, as smoothly as you can, till we can get a secure anchorage for him."

He was helped forward accordingly, though not quite as gently as Frank seemed to expect, and at a pace anything but consolatory to his wound, whether slight or serious.

The attackers had but cleared the plantation a few minutes before the dragoons came up, with Heavisides puffing like the chimney of a steam engine. The horsemen, however, delayed a few minutes more, to aid their comrades, who now ventured forth, in quenching the flames which had, as yet, only commenced an assault on the rear door and windows of the mansion itself; and when they all, after having mastered the fire, proceeded to the pursuit, there was no vestige of the rapparees to be seen in the plantation or adjoining grounds, though they had waited, it was evident, to bear off the fallen bodies with them, as there was no trace of these, except that the sward was slippery, in places, with their blood.

"I know it, blast my eyes," said Heavisides, after a brief consultation; "the rascals are goin' to plunder the cottage, as they doesn't venture t' attack Sir Robert's or the curate's. But we'll be at the dog's

'eels. 'Ere, Jones, take 'alf the party round by the weir; myself and t'other 'alf 'll go by the 'orse-park, wot we came by."

Now, though the serjeant-major affected to think the rapparees such fools as to venture to the cottage, after their discomfiture at Ffolliot's Grove, he had no such thought. But he wished to make certain of one small portion of the night's arrangements, namely, the carrying off Bessy with him; for he was either too little of a prudential calculator, or had too much confidence in his usual good fortune, to have any misgivings, that his allowing himself to be so easily duped and misled, and the consequent destruction of Isaac Ffolliot and the wounding of his two comrades, would debar Sir John and his captain from interfering in his favour, after the flight should have been ascertained.

The parties separated, and we shall accompany the serjeant. In fact, the other division closely imitated the celebrated progress of

"The king of France, with twenty thousand men,"

namely, in doing nothing; for they found nothing to do; reaching the cottage, after having, with some difficulty, in consequence of the faint light, crossed the weir, without seeing or hearing anything of the retreating rapparees, who had betaken themselves to the fastnesses of the Partree mountains—a direction nearly at right angles with *their* route.

When the party returned to the cottage, Aaron Andrews, who was in a state of great excitement, instantly flying at the troop-serjeant-major, who was the first to enter, seized him by the collar, exclaiming, in a tone hoarse with passion, "so Mr. serjeant,

you've daured to tak' awa' a loyal Protestant's daughter. But return her again till her father, or——"

"W'y, Aaron Handrews, w'ere is your daughter, man?" interrupted Heavisides, impatiently.

"Come, come, nibor, that cock won't fight. We've proof that you prevailed on the foolish lassie to flit wi' you; ond gin she's no restored afore sunrise, safe ond unharmed, by the God o' my fathers, Sir John or Captain Aylmer shall see me righted—ay, even till your destruction, or the higher powers shall hearken till it."

"Who 'eard myself and Bessy Handrews, this evenin'?"

"Opr honest maiden, Hetty Matthews, wha remained close till you, during all the planning."

"Then, I'll be damned, but she's betrayed and hundone us both: let me see her, howsomedever."

The maid was not to be found; but her comrade male-servant came in breathlessly, to state that a party of men were passing along the hedge on the summit of the old mill park, about a furlong to the rear of the foundry.

"Them there's the villain rapparees, as sure as my name's Bill, and they're a bearin' off my darlin' Bessy with 'em. But we'll put a 'alt to their gallop, and rescue the rosebud still. Come, boys, one more start, and we shall have the reward still, I know."

The fire-arms having been re-examined, the party set forward again on their wild-goose chase, the serjeant leading them at a pace neither to be expected from his corpulency nor his previous fatigues.

"I dinna gi' credit at all till the serjeant's innocence," said Aaron, looking after him; "for all that

he acts no' like a mon playin' oot a desateful play. But whaever cajoled Bessy Andrews fra her father's hoose, gin cajoled she be, shall pay dearly for it, gin there's law to be hod in Ireland—ay, or in England 'ither—by the God that created me."

"Damn my eyes," said a dragoon, after the party had proceeded a couple of hundred yards from the cottage, "if there aint a wench, any 'ow, passin' along the 'edge. I see her cloak and cap between me and the star."

"And so there is, surely; and it's no one but my hangel, Bessy. Double-quick, boys," exclaimed Heavisides, panting and pushing on at an increased pace, as he perceived distinctly a female form moving by the hedge, in a line between him and the evening star, that was filling with her beautiful light a portion of even the summer night air.

"The serjeant's *fey* the night, Ise thinkin', wi' his scaurin' ond gallopin' in a' directions, afther a bit lassie," observed Sandy.

The object of this observation kept still in advance of the party, most of whom loudly expressed their enjoyment at his panting exertions. Yet the figure he was pursuing continued ahead of him. Once or twice, indeed, he evidently closed fast on it, though it shot away from him again; and a third time he was so near that, reaching out his hand to grasp its garments, he panted in a beseeching tone, "Bessy—my—my hangel—we're far enough now—and—and there's no one near—but your own true-earted 'eavisides—so 'alt—'alt, my hangel—till I come hup—to you."

The obdurate figure, however, which he was now quite certain must be Bessy, from his being near

enough to ascertain that it was certainly enfolded in a horseman's cloak, glided away heedless of his entreaties; and the next instant he saw it slide through a gap, somewhat in advance of him, to the opposite side of the hedge.

Thinking he might gain something in pursuit by clambering over the hedge where he was, without losing time to reach the gap, the persevering pursuer, with lengthened exertions and loss of breath, mounted and sprang boldly forward on the other side. But old Dodsley has it in his "Precepts of Human Life," that a man who leapeth over a fence in haste may fall into a pit on the other side. And even so was it with the ill-fated serjeant-major—ill-fated for that night, at least. To his utter discomfiture, he found himself after his jump sunk above his knees in a broad drain filled by recent rains with mud and muddy water, while, as a climax to his annoyance, a low laugh saluted his ear from the spot where he could perceive the figure standing, as if enjoying his situation.

Uttering a shout of rage and vexation, he attempted to scramble from his uncomfortable berth; but the bank was too high and the moat too deep, and it was only by the assistance of the party, who had been drawn to the spot by his shout, that he was uplifted to the bank, amid their loud or repressed laughter, like some unwieldy sea-monster that had been left in helpless plight by the retiring tide.

There was neither rapparee nor female now to be seen. Indeed, the serjeant confessed his opinion that it was not his "hangel" he had been pursuing after all, but either her arch maiden, who had often played him a trick before, and whose voice he

thought he had distinguished in the laugh, or some worse shape; and the dragoons were fain to give up the useless chase, a few of them returning to Ffoliot's Grove, and the remainder, after having obtained their cloaks at the cottage, proceeding under the guidance of their comrade (the former guide) to the place where their horses had been left, and thence to their quarters.

CHAPTER XX.

SIR JOHN was striding to and fro his study the morning succeeding the attack. There was a deeper gloom on his brow, as he flung an occasional menacing glance from the letter he was reading to his vile agent, Shawn, who was standing near the door, with sullen doggedness in his aspect, except that, now and then, when Sir John's back was to him, there was on his face a villainous leer, as if he were enjoying his superior's annoyance.

"So," said Sir John, in a stern tone, as he halted abruptly, "last night's business will tell finely for me in Dublin, after having received such a rebuff from the Castle already. And you, ruffian, to proclaim that the scum of rapparees were urged on by the scoundrel, priest Kilger, whom you have suffered to loiter about in the district, contrary to your duty and directions."

"But how, your noble honour, Sir John," asked Shawn, sullenly, "am I to hunt priests down, if

they're to get shelter from thim that's ped for makin' Prodestans, as well as from out-spoken an' relapsed papists?"

"Silence, rascal," said Sir John, sternly; "attempt no lying defence. I have trustworthy information that you slept under the same roof with Kilger, without attempting to apprehend him. But, by the bones of Black Dick," an ancestor the baronet was fond of making adjurations by when much excited, "if you do not speedily atone for your drunken negligence, by his capture, I will make short work in sending you on as long a voyage as any priest among them."

"To be sure, your noble honour can do just whatever it pleases you to do. But whoever gev you the information about Kilger, I have as sartin evidence that parson Gordon himself shelthers papists, an' relapsed papists, an' that the cottage is still a din for every sthragglin' priest to shelter himsel' in; an' how can I do my duty in fairity, whin such doin's as that is put up with?"

"And here comes Mr. Gordon in time to disprove your assertion, or he shall hear more about it."

The rector was admitted, immediately followed by Ffoliot, while Aaron Andrews, who had accompanied Mr. Gordon, remained in the area abroad, his sturdy independence firing at the idea of standing in the hail till he should be called in.

"Sir John, Sir John," said Ffoliot, bursting out vehemently on his entrance, "these are dreadful times when a man's house is attempted to be burned almost in your very presence, the king's troops are shot at, and a man loses his nearest and dearest relative by a violent death, merely because he was

sanguinely and fearlessly loyal in a rebellious and desperate district. But there must be vengeance for this."

He slapped his hand across his brow as he leant against the window for a moment, as if overpowered by grief and vexation, though Sir John shrewdly suspected there was more of vexation in the matter than men, however desperate, should have had the presumption to attack *his* house, than grief for the loss of a brother through whose death money was to be gained.

"And vengeance there shall be, Mr. Ffolliot," rejoined Sir John, "though I must be of opinion that if the proprietors of property could be brought to feel and exhibit the same bold fearlessness which the authorities practise, the cowardly rabble would seldom dare to venture such attacks as that of last night. But how is it, Mr. Gordon (turning to that gentleman), that your name comes to be mixed up with the sheltering of papists, and thus, in some measure, inviting and encouraging lawlessness?"

"That I would be among the first to prevent and discourage acts of aggression and outrage is so widely known that it is but a waste of words to assert it now. As regards my acts and opinions in reference to other matters, they have been known to you, Sir John, of long standing; and in that respect, without infringing on existing laws, I shall continue to act as I think befits a gentleman and a Christian pastor."

"And do you think it Christian or gentlemanlike to sympathize with such as defy the laws, attack houses, and commit midnight murder?" asked Ffolliot, with some vehemence.

"I must claim the privilege of being allowed to

form my own estimate of crimes, and the causes that produce them, at the same time that I deplore, as deeply as any one can, the daring attack on your house, Mr. Ffolliot, and your melancholy bereavement in consequence."

"An' Mr. Ffolliot needn't be too hard on the tinants, aither, your noble honour," said Shawn, boldly edging in his word, "seein' that his own son takes good care to visit an' cumfort a papist lady purty of'n, as Mr. Gordon could bair witness to, if he liked."

"Why to tell the truth, Sir John," observed the rector, avoiding all reference to Shawn's allusion, "much as I sympathise for Mr. Ffolliot's great loss, it is not in reference to *his* concern in last night's unfortunate affair that I have come this morning. We all know you will spare neither time nor energy to make the offenders expiate their foul and daring crime; and as my time is limited, in consequence of Maria's having received a severe shock through the terrors of the last night, perhaps you will permit me to say at once, Sir John, that my present visit to you is owing to a serious charge by a parishioner of mine against the troop serjeant-major in command of the dragoons last night; the charge is the abduction of his daughter, an only child, during the confusion of the proceedings."

"By the bones of Black Dick, the last seems to be a night of adventures with a vengeance. But who is the parishioner? perhaps it is some scoundrel papist."

"No, Sir John; he is the industrious and improving proprietor of the foundry, Aaron Andrews."

"Ha! Andrews must be protected, and righted,

too, if he has been injured. Let the unwieldy parcel of flesh and Captain Aylmer appear before us—quick—quick.”

Shawn flew to execute the message, and he was instantly followed by Ffolliot, who wished to question him, and who felt no interest in the investigation to ensue.

The captain and his subordinate were speedily in the study, into which Aaron also was admitted at the same time.

“Well, Andrews,” asked Sir John, on the former’s entrance, “what proof have you of the charge you make against this fellow?”

“My maiden, Hetty Matthews, Sir John, hearkened till the whole scheme, ond she’s ready ond willin’ to mak’ an offidavit o’ what she overheard at the elm tree. She’ll swear, moreover, Sir John, that he pursued hersel’ ofther, till her terror and danger, for more nor a quarther mile, until he fell soose intill a ditch.”

“Well, sirrah,” said Sir John, “you hear Andrew’s charge against you; what have you to say—eh—sirrah!”

The serjeant’s jolly, well-coloured face blazed like a girl’s as, after some stammering attempts, he got out—

“I’m not a-going to deny, Sir John, that the gal might ’ave a likin’ for me wot was natrel—”

“Bessy Ondrews a likin’ for sic a porpus!” interrupted her father, vehemently; “sae far fra it, that it was wi’ difficult she could be induced to come in till the parlour, when I used, like a fule, t’ invite ye in, thinkin’ ye wor a God-fearin’ ond a straightfor-ward mon, offer ye rescued me fra the rioters on the

road, yon market night. But gin she ganged wi' ye, wi' her ain consent, ye maun hae resorted till witchcraft for it."

"Why, truly," observed Sir John, a smile flitting across his dark features, "he seems rather an extraordinary Romeo for so fair a Juliet. But sirrah, did you, in fact, take away the girl, whether with or against her own consent? no equivocation."

"Nay, Sir John. I will not deny that the gal and myself 'ad a parley at the helm tree, and that we'd hagreed that she should helope with me. But, 'owever she went, I never set a heye on her from that hour to this, as my comrades can make haffidavit on, seein' as how that I was never out of their sight, the 'ole time."

"Harken not till the villain," exclaimed Andrews, eagerly. "God knows where he has her concealed this moment. O, Sir John, gin I could bring myself to kneel till mortal mon, I wad bend at yer feet, to implore ye to see restored till her father, an affectionate child, reared in the ways of duty and morality, till a villain tempted her fra' the path. Remimber, Sir John, ye once had bairns yoursel', ond that I'm pleading for my daughter—the only child of her mother, that was dearer till me nor land or gold—ay, dear as the apple of my eye."

"If I was certain," rejoined Sir John, startled if not affected by Aaron's earnest appeal.—"Aylmer, what has been this fellow's character heretofore?"

"The steadiest and most exemplary in the troop."

"Then he's an impostor, I'll swear till it," said Aaron, eagerly.

"You will excuse the vehemence of poor Andrews, under the circumstances, Sir John," said the rector:

"and you know he has always sustained the character of being a man of the most unimpeachable credit and veracity."

"Yes, yes, I know; and the fellow's conduct last night does not certainly tally with your high character of him, Aylmer—ay, the wealth of Andrews and her being an only child, was a heavy temptation—but rather gives colour to the suspicion that, he was engaged in some scheme of his own, instead of performing his duty like an active and a cautious soldier. At all events, see you that the barracks be minutely searched for the girl, as well as all the haunts of himself and his comrades, in the town. I shall have the neighbouring locality so strictly searched, that a cat could not remain undiscovered, and if the fellow be found to have been concerned in the abduction of a loyal Protestant's daughter, by the bones of Black Dick, short time shall he have for repentance in this world."

"I seek not the mon's blude, nor his downfall," said Aaron, "let him but gi' back till me my daughter unharmed, ond he shall ha' e'en mair gold nor ever he could expect wi' her."

"No, no, Andrews," exclaimed Sir John, "justice shall not be compromised. If he can restore her to you for money, I'll take care he shall do so without it, or black will be his fate."

"Nay, Sir John, "remonstrated the bewildered and crest-fallen serjeant, "you aint going to 'ang a man without judge or jury. I can prove—heasily can I—by my comrades, as I'd neither 'and, hact or part in the gal's habduction, hattached as I know she was to me, and hanxious as I was as we should be joined in 'oly wedlock.

"So much the better for yourself if you are stating the truth—see, Captain Aylmer, that the search be most strict; and let Heavisides be kept in confinement till you hear from me again."

"It shall be done, Sir John," said the officer, as he departed with his wronged and chapfallen subordinate.

"Now Gordon," resumed the baronet, when they were alone, "I would advise you strongly to turn a new leaf in your book, or rather take a leaf from mine. You see that lenity and forbearance only embolden those rascally *mere* Irish to outrage and instruction. Thank God I, at least, cannot accuse myself of encouraging them by mistaken forbearance."

"Neither does my conscience accuse me for having sympathy for the children of misfortune and suffering, though surely not with the intention of encouraging them to crime."

"Ay, but it has had the effect you see, as outrage is at present limited, in this country, to your district."

"No, no, Sir John, I deny the inference *in toto*. You know that my opinion, of long standing, has been that it is cruelty and harshness that have been the provocations to crime, and that it is the authorities that have need to turn a new leaf, and try to produce order and submission, by mildness instead of severity. But we will not continue to argue where we have no likelihood of agreeing; and I see, by that pile of papers, that you are full of business."

"Yes, yes, we are pretty sure to have abundance of despatches while we have such actors as those of last night, astir. In some of these I have myself got

a hard rap over the knuckles for—what *you* would never have thought of accusing me of—my remissness and want of energy in keeping down popery ; and I imagine you may expect a much severer blow unless you change your system speedily.”

“ Then, let it come, Sir John ; an approving conscience will be my armour of proof.”

The rector and Andrews now made their bows, the latter somewhat re-assured by the zeal with which Sir John—whose dreaded power and untiring vigilance he was well aware of, took up the abduction.

They had been but a short time gone when Ffolliot re-entered, exclaiming vehemently, “ those Lynches are certainly a damnable set. Do you know it was one of them, I am informed, that headed the attack last night, in which my poor dear brother—oh,” he put his hand to his face for a moment, as if unable to proceed—“ you will excuse my weakness, Sir John ; but I cannot speak or think of my terrible misfortune with any calmness.”

“ Pshaw, man,” said the baronet, eyeing him sternly. “ It is natural we should grieve for the loss of a brother, particularly cut off in such a manner ; but we are made of sterner stuff than to faint for it. But which of the Lynches has been concerned in last night’s outrage ?”

“ Frank Lynch, Sir Robert’s cousin, and whom you will recollect, Sir John, report states to be connected with a band of smugglers.”

“ Ha ! has that wild bird winged his flight to those shores again ?”

“ It appears so, and I understand there were some seamen—doubtless smugglers—aiding and assisting him also. Those Lynches are becoming daily greater

eye-sores to the country, and it would add to the security and comfort of every loyal man, if they were completely weeded out of it."

"Why the head of them, Sir Robert, is taking all the means in his power to rid the country, and the world fast of his incumbrance; and if he but continues his present career of riot and debauchery, I should fancy the lease of his life, ere another year be past, would be but of little value, even should the termination of his journey be not accelerated by a bullet or a fall.

"I am by no means so confident of that, Sir John; the Lynches are a long-lived race. And then there's that pale-faced hussy of a recusant. Don't you think, Sir John, it would be a great advantage to us both, if she were out of the country."

"Why to *you*, Ffoliot, it would be an advantage; but I can't see how her existence at all can affect me."

"Suppose, Sir John, she was induced to become a conformist, would she not then be an additional barrier? And I do confess that, as that green boy of mine cannot, you see, be deterred, by threats or entreaties, from continuing his visits to her, whatever bewitchment she has thrown over him, I should be most delighted if she were removed. Would to God, indeed, she were once out of his reach, as his senses would then, of course, return to him."

"Well there is a good deal, Ffoliot, in what you have said respecting her possible change of creed, and which, I will admit, did often strike me before; and as I see what you are driving at to come to the point at once, I shall not overrule any plan you may have for changing her residence and country,

always providing that no violence nor injury shall be offered to a lady born, recusant though she be."

"I would not presume to form a plan without your sanction first, Sir John. It only occurred to me that, if she were conveyed across the sea, she might, without changing her faith, by being *induced* to take the veil, be effectually debarred from interfering further with your views or mine."

"A feasible plan enough I must say; and I bethink me that there is an Ursuline convent near Rheims, the prioress of which would, I know, take some pains for my sake. Poor Agnes! had we met earlier, or your haughty friends been less stern and unbending, the world might wear a brighter aspect for us both, and this steeled-heart be not altogether rugged and desolate as now!" He strode to the window—put his hand to his eyes—turned suddenly, and asked in a tone of much harshness, "Well, Ffoliot, have you any more eligible place in your eye?" ashamed and irritated that any one should witness the burst of emotion he could not, for the moment, control.

"No, Sir John," exclaimed Ffoliot, delightedly; "your arrangement is just the portion of the plan I could not myself have accomplished, and which will crown the whole. No one would take the same pains for me as for you; and I am, I must venture to say, Sir John, too remarkable for my zealous loyalty to have a sincere friend among the recusants, either here or on the continent."

"Then the plan is easy of accomplishment; but it must be quietly and cautiously carried out, lest that noisy debauched brother, if he gets scent of the matter, should make more noise than might be just pleasant. The most delicate part of the business will

be to procure a vessel to convey the girl speedily and secretly to where she can give no more annoyance."

It was then arranged that Ffolliot, with Shawn and a party, should visit the cottage the ensuing day, with the double object of searching for Father Kilger and ascertaining the usual position of its inmates.

CHAPTER XXI.

ON the evening of the day, the proceedings of which have been detailed in the last chapter, our old acquaintance, Charley Rorke, was proceeding towards the castle in order to consult Sir John respecting an extensive smuggling transaction of which he had just received information. His own residence was, as before stated, in one of the suburbs, and he was passing along some plots, through which there was a byepath that shortened his way, when his ear was attracted by the voices of two persons a little in advance of him. One of them struck him as familiar; and passing the parties hastily a few yards, he turned and, having scrutinized them for a moment, approaching immediately again, said, in a low and laughing tone, "Why, Master Frank Lynch, though you've deepened your Milesian complexion to a true creole pitch, you must alter your voice too before you can be entirely mistaken; and I would advise you not to depend too much on your transformation, even at this hour, as I can tell you a strict watch is abroad—you understand me. Perch yourself, with your youthful companion, in Madden's hotel, till I see

you again in an hour. I have something to say to you, and I would serve you for old recollections' sake."

The pair addressed started; but Charley passed on with a significant motion of his hand, but without further words.

Charley was in general an acceptable guest at the castle when the baronet was unengaged, owing to his fund of humorous anecdote, skill in all kinds of sports and games and other social qualities.

On this evening he was, as usual, instantly admitted, and found Sir John with wine, brandy and papers before him.

"Ha, Charley! be seated—help yourself, and tell us what's the news stirring in our good borough later than last night's attack."

"Why, Sir John," responded Charley, after having complied with the baronet's request, "the last rumour was—though I fear its not gospel—that you had turned papist, and that Ffolliot is appointed to the governorship."

"Ha, ha, you will, I see, like greater and better men, have your jests to the end—but did you meet Ffolliot to-day? That was an awkward occurrence last night, though he is playing off too much grief even for the loss of a brother."

"By the bones of St. Ruth—pardon me for the oath, Sir John—Ffolliot, in getting ten or twelve thousand pounds by old Isaac's fall, ten or fifteen years earlier than he could have calculated on, is little more grieved in reality than would be your humble servant, Sir John, to hear of the demise of one of their high mightinesses the surveyors-general and that his place fell to Charley Rorke."

"Ha, ha, good! But were you talking with Ffolliot, and was he canting?"

"Yes, Sir John, and he canted like parson—but I wont vex you, Sir John, by naming names—and then the old sinner looked as chapfallen as he did the day I choused him of the prog, six years ago at the shore. Did I ever tell you the story—but you're, perhaps, in no humour for a story now."

"I'm just in the vein—help yourself again, Charley—as I've had a dose of business to nauseousness for the day; and, if you tell it in your best style, you may do more than the wine to sweeten my blood."

"Well then," began Charley, after having emptied his glass with a smack and filled another, without putting the baronet to the trouble of repeating his solicitation, "you remember, Sir John, the remarkable year that the Dutch smuggler showed fight and killed some of his majesty's seamen in the bay."

"Ay, to be sure I do—the year you were brought over the coals for being so terribly visited with loss of sight as to pass by the brandy and tobacco in the broad day-light."

"Oh very well, Sir John," rejoined Charley, as he emptied and filled again, "I owe you one for that. Any way, Ffolliot and myself were stopping for a few day's sporting at Bob Coghlan's—that, now that he's dead, we may venture to say, made more of defrauding the king's revenue for the last twenty years than all the other men on the coast, though his venison, his fish, and his brandy got him the patronage of us all, from the governor (bowing) down to the humble gauger. Well, one evening of great merrymery—by the way, Sir John, this brandy is as good

as if it were smuggled—the magistrate and myself, in our boastings made a bet as to which of us should bag the most game in two or three hours of the next day, for Ffolliot was certainly *then* a prime shot, and I needn't say I could pull a sure trigger myself. However my intention was not to strive with him then, but to play the skinflint a prank that would be remembered to him. Accordingly the next morning, after we had given our heads a plentiful immersion in cold water, swallowed some tumblers of hot milk punch instead of soda water or buttermilk, and punished a breakfast that would have made a greenhorn stare, after a hard night's work, we prepared to set out on the shooting match."

"Ye were cool and steady then."

"One of us didn't want to be steady, Sir John."

"Well, Bill Ffolliot," says myself, 'as we're to remain out for three or four hours, surely we'll require to take some refreshments with us, after the night.'

"Small blame to you for that idea, any way, which is worthy of Charley Rorke," says our host, laughing; 'and by Jove, you shall have the remains of the decanter and the ham, if you fancy it, particularly as *we're* sure to have the port you know,' (the bet was half-a-dozen port).

"O, divle a doubt," says I, 'but we'll all have it at Bill's expense.'

"Faith, Charley, you'll have to borrow the price or to run tick for it," says Bill, winking and examining his flint.

"*Bedher shin*' (may be so), says myself; 'but by the piper that played before Moses, I'm undher a great mistake, or there'll be an item of half-a-dozen

port added to Bill's six-folio'd account—Neddy, Neddy (the boy that was to carry the refreshments), put the ham under, it can bear crushing, and the bottle on the top, as it is brittle: put the bread between them and the two—there that'll do now.'

" 'But when and where'll we meet, Charley?' says Bill.

" 'It's now past twelve,' says myself boldly: 'let us meet at two, hardby the little stream at the tuck mill, to snack. Then let us shoot for another hour, when, whoever has least game bagged, let him pay the piper; and, as I'm dead sure of having the most birds, and Bill may have some suspicion of the fairness of my shooting, though I have the most perfect reliance on *his* honour, come with me you, Neddy, as a witness that everything shall be done in the most sportmanlike style.'

" 'Fair, by Jove, Charley, I must say, as you know you're always suspected,' says Bob.

" 'Oh, a guilty conscience—you know the rest,' says Bill.

" So the arrangement was settled, and we set out, well provided with all appliances for bird murder, Bill taking a direction towards the mountains, while myself, with Neddy in my wake, took nearly the opposite one towards the shore. But when we had reached a furlong or so from the house, 'hallo, Neddy, you numbskull,' says I, 'close up, and let us rest ourselves on that heathy spot, near the stream.'——"

" And was that the way you intended to kill your game? But help yourself: story telling is dry work."

" Yes, Sir John—why, this brandy improves with

every glass. But I don't wonder at your question. Neddy asked me the same question, opening his eyes as wide as if he never intended to shut them.

" 'Did you think, you dunderhead,' says I, 'that I had the least notion of scrambling over bog and ditch, and you, with the scoff, to be along with me, when I made the bet.'

'By Gonny,' says Neddy, with a shout, 'though I always knew your honour to be as full o' thricks as an egg is o' mate, I didn't dhrame yew wor goin' to play so capityal a thrick to-day.'

'That shows, Neddy,' says I, 'that you have as little brains as your master, who certainly showed himself no Solomon, to entrust ham and brandy to my care—here quick—a pull, you blackguard, while I stretch my batthered legs on this soft patch of heath——ho, how it does revive one after a night's spree; and I never felt more bothered than after last night. And so you thought, like an ass as you are, that I was going to harass those legs, that are certainly not the best fitted for hard service, and for a bubble bet too, for the divle a bird will Bill Ffolliot shoot till he goes back, barring he hits a gull or a crow near the house. So here's another pull to his success. Holy Moses, how he will stare and curse when he comes to look for the prog, and finds it *non est inventus*! Oh, my poor legs, you are sadly the worse for the wear to-day.'

'Why, to tell God's truth, an' shame the divle, they wouldn't make a good pair ov understanders, for Tom Saltry, the dancing master, at present yer honour,' says Neddy, thrying to smother his laugh.

'You'r laughing, you impudent vagabond,' says I, 'but here, rinch this empty snuff-box, and I'll

give you a toothful in it, though you don't deserve it; and, while we're resting, I'll tell you a story about those same understanders.'

"I gave him the snuff-box full, and told him the story, which you have by heart, Sir John. Neddy, of course, enjoyed it, and while he was laughing uproariously, I stretched myself on the heath for a nap, directing him to rouse me, should any one come near; at all events, to waken me in an hour for our snack."

"If I was there, the cat-o'-nine tails of the trumpeters should have sounded the *reveille* on your bones."

"Neddy was more tender-hearted, Sir John; he remained by me—I wouldn't swear he hadn't another pull at the bottle—while I had a most refreshing nap. I was in the middle of a glorious dream about brandy and tea, tobacco and promotion, when he woke me for the snack, though, I believe, the black-guard gauged the hour by his stomach, and not by real time. Any way, we had scarcely finished, and I was only in the act of making a clearance of the brandy, which was nearly as good as your own, Sir John (with a smack), when up comes Bill, disconsolate and lame as a tired hack, after carrying a jowly parson a long day's journey—I mean no diaspres to the church, Sir John."

"Go on, you privileged vagabond."

"The divle fire yourself and your fowling—b give us a pull to keep the life in us,' says he, wiping the perspiration off his face, and offering at the bottle."

"I'm greatly afraid, Bill, that it's fooling you so-day, and not fowling,' says I, turning down t

neck of the bottle, to show him that the brandy was gone, like the snow that was last year.

“ ‘ And did you shoot nothing ? ’ says he, looking as blank as a catchpole, when he finds the nest warm and the bird gone—he had himself a decayed sea-gull in his bag.

“ ‘ Shoot ! didn’t myself and Neddy shoot the contents of the basket down our throats, as I intended ; and faith pleasant shooting it was.’

“ It would have done your heart good, Sir John, to hear how he ramped and cursed then. Why, he nearly came up to a trooper, or a governor in a rage. But he turned his tail to Bob Coghlan’s, without waiting for his dinner, and wouldn’t look at me for a year after.”

CHAPTER XXII.

“ Ha, ha, good, Charley ! ” exclaimed the baronet, when the story ceased, “ and the feat was worthy of you. I would have given ten pounds for a glance at his countenance, when he found you had bilked him fairly. And now your coast anecdote reminds me that you may, perhaps, be able to answer a question I had proposed to ask.”

The brandy and the story had, by this time, inclined him to be confidential, to a limited extent, with his good humoured companion, when a doubt struck him as to his trustworthiness. But, after a second’s pause, he discarded it, resuming : “ Yes, Rorke, I am going to ask you a confidential question, because I think you are not inclined to betray my

confidence, and that, if you even werè, you dar not——”

The grim smile passed across the baronet's face though somewhat softened in its sternness, and he eyed the gauger searchingly, for an instant before he put the question: “Do you, through your acquaintance with the coast, chance to know any one that would, just now, convey a refractory girl secretly and securely to the north coast of France or Flanders without blabbing, eh?”

Charley paused, and, like a skilful angler as he was on land, as well as by water, having ascertained from the baronet's answer to a few adroit questions, though asked with apparently no aim, that the refractory girl was from the neighbourhood of Lough Carra and of the proscribed creed, he came to the conclusion that it was Ellen Lynch, against whom the outrage was intended, and he answered, “I think, Sir John, I know where there is at this moment and near at hand, a Dutch skipper that, I have strong suspicions, has balked both us and the revenue most successfully within those three days, and who is, I think, a man that would answer your purpose completely.”

“Then bring him to me, while the matter is on my mind—promptly, eh!”

“Shall I send him to you at once, Sir John, if I find him?”

“At once sir, without a moment's delay, if possible.”

At his fastest pace did Charley forwith repair to Madden's where he found Frank and his young friend ensconced in the snug little parlour. Taking the former aside, the good-natured gauger whispered

rapidly to him, Sir John's inquiries and his own conviction that Ellen was the intended victim. "I thought of you fortunately," he concluded, "and have come at the top of my speed to send you to him—but are you prepared to sail immediately?"

"Not, by Heaven, until I have taken vengeance on the tyrant for his intended villany."

"Whew! you want to get strong lodgings for yourself, to prepare you for a longer journey over the seas than ever you bargained for, that is if a little hemp shouldn't save you the trouble. You would not commit murder, and where would you be five minutes after giving Sir John an open provocation? and then who would your cousin have for a protector?"

"You are right, sir, I suppose, and we owe you deep gratitude for your kind interference more than once. But what course am I to steer then?"

"Has Sir John much acquaintance with your person or features?"

"I have been in his presence, to my recollection, but three times in my life; and he has not set eye at all on me, I think for the last seven or eight years."

"Then, in your present disguise, there is no danger in the world of his discovering you, as besides the change in your complexion, you look, at least, ten years beyond your time; and I suppose you can gabble something he may take for the Dutch or German—for the matter of that I don't know but Irish would answer very well. So you must proceed instantly to him—"

"No, no, Frank," observed his companion eagerly, "you must not venture near Sir John, at all."

"You must not bring your little skipjack of a

comrade with you at any rate," observed Rorke, with a laugh, "or by the bones of St. Ruth, the voice of the whipper snapper would soon show the baron that petticoats would befit him better than a sailor's trousers, pert as he looks in them; and this might stir up suspicion of my bold captain that would, perhaps, turn out not pleasantly. But let her or him (she likes it better) come with me to Mrs. Rorke, till you return."

"Frank, venture not at all—"

"But for Ellen's sake, dear—"

"Well, Frank, if you *must* go, I go too."

"Then in God's name, if she must go, make her at all events, keep her mouth as close as a miser's pocket, as a word might ruin all; and there's not a minute more to be lost, lest some chance visitor should call at the castle and opportunity be lost forever—one word more; don't be too eager to close the terms, but make a hard bargain for the voyage. And remember, win or lose, that you, and all connected with you, will always have a warm and willing friend in Charley Rorke, as far as the time will allow him to be such. God send you success."

Frank and his comrade speedily reached the castle and were at once ushered into Sir John's presence.

"You are the person Rorke spoke to me of," said the baronet, addressing Frank.

"Yaw, mynheer, Jans Schrooter of the good schip Vanderfeldt."

"And who is your smock-faced comrade? He seems not adapted for seafaring—who are you sirrah? What is the fellow mousing at—is he tongue-tied?"

"Yaw, mynheer, dat ish it. He bin vat you call von doomb: he tell no tale, and the poor teyvil, I

never part vit me, and ish as true as de compash, a long years—poor Diedrich von Strumpfen.”

“Tongue-tied, say you? Then so much the better. Has Rorke told you that I wished to have a person conveyed to the Continent?”

“Yaw, mynheer.”

“Then what is your demand for carrying a girl to L’Orient, St. Maloe or any other port in the North-west of France—at a word—eh?”

“Vell den, mynheer, I would say von two hoon-dhred marks, for cause I must put mein good schip out of her courses.”

“Say ten pounds sterling, and it shall be yours; and the evening after to-morrow, if you be prepared, you shall receive your freight from myself and Mr. Ffolliot, with directions.”

“Donner and Blitzen, tish von too shmall, mynheer.”

“’Tis too much: you will retire now and remember the eve after to-morrow. But stay a moment. It may occur even to your Dutch intellect that you have now an important secret of mine; but,” he added in a stern whisper, “the slightest inquiry will convince you that nobody can betray—has betrayed Sir John Ingram with impunity, else might you wonder I should intrust an unknown person in such an affair. You could gain only peril—perhaps destruction—by any attempt at treachery. For your own sake, then, be secret and punctual, and dread nothing—good night.”

“But, Hagel, vil you not gif us von nother feefty marks—dat ish fifteen pounds, mynheer?”

“My word is never altered, and our conference has been long enough,” said the baronet almost fiercely. “Be punctual.”

Frank and his companion now quitted the castle, but without any marks of precipitancy; and it was not till they had left it some hundred yards behind them that Frank said in a whisper, "We have just made a good tack to save poor Ellen; and, though I was afraid you would miss channel and run aground, you minded the signal well, Bessy"—for Bessy it was, who, though she had quitted her father's house with Frank, through fear of what the morrow should bring, yet resisted all his persuasions to proceed to the coast with him until she should have ascertained how things were really circumstanced at the cottage. Thither they were accordingly proceeding when they fortunately encountered Rorke; Frank having little or no fears about venturing so near the scene of the last night's attack, as he had been apprized that it was in another direction the search was just then being made after the attackers.

"Do you know, Frank," observed the courageous girl, "that imprudent as I knew it might have been to speak, I had great difficulty to curb myself from proclaiming that I was the daughter of a loyal Protestant, and that, for all his power, Sir John dare not meddle with a born lady, without her own consent."

"It's well you did shorten sail, however, Bessy. But what are we to do next?"

"Will you not give warning to your cousin?"

"I think, on consideration, Bessy, it is better to receive her as a freight from the tyrant himself, as he proposed; for I fear myself and poor Ellen would have but little chance of braving his power successfully, as, you see, he is himself well aware of—particularly as I am positive that even Ffolliot could scarcely, by any possibility, have a suspicion of me

in my present trim, and especially as it is at night I am to meet them."

"I believe you are right, Frank," she observed; and they forthwith resumed their route, Frank beguiling the way by detailing his future plans and projects in another land, stating his intentions of immediately abandoning his present course of life, and his certainty of obtaining a place of emolument and permanence on their arrival in Holland.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHILE the interviews just recorded were taking place in Ingram castle, other and very different scenes were being enacted on the shores of Lough Carra.

Ellen was sitting at her little parlour window; her cheek resting on her hand, and her eyes fixed in mournful meditation on the placid and sunlit waters of the lake, when Ffolliot (not Arthur, as the reader may guess,) with Shawn and a party of dragoons galloped up to the front of the cottage. The former, excited by Shawn's detail of his son's undiminished affection for Ellen, and continued visits to her, had worked himself up to the determination of being unceremoniously stern at the cottage. But the mourning garb, the attitude and the mournful expression of Ellen's countenance, contrasting strikingly as they did with her whole appearance the

last time he had met her familiarly, stirred up some compunctious feelings for the moment; and bowing slightly as he entered with Shawn and two of the dragoons, he said in rather a respectful, though cold tone, "We have come here—we are compelled to come—under the sanction of Sir John, in consequence of information that one of those pestilent, prohibited priests was in the habit of being concealed latterly in the cottage."

"Mr. Ffolliot," she said, rising from her seat and elevating herself to her fullest height, and with a forced calmness of voice, while the tears of pride and resentment forced themselves to her eyes at the same time, "though this is not the manner of visit I should expect from so old an acquaintance of my—my dear mother (the tears burst out freely), yet this humble cottage is, of course, open at all times to whatever visits those in authority chose to make, when and how they please."

Ffolliot and the dragoons passed on, examining minutely the few small apartments, and thence proceeding, for appearance sake (at least on the part of the leader), to the little garden, without meeting either him they apparently sought for, or any obstruction. Only at the garden gate did they experience any annoyance, as it chanced that Katty was entering as they approached it.

Laying down the pail she carried, and looking intently into Ffolliot's face, she exclaimed with emphatic bitterness, clapping her hands together fiercely at the same time, "*ma shogth millia mollogth* (my seven thousand curses) on you, Billy Ffolliot. I know who ye're sarchin afther; an' it's long afore ar gran' father, ould *Leem* (William), or yer

mother, Nancy Larkin, ud dhrame o' priesthuntin'—not to talk of it's bein' ill yer commons to give any throuble to the daughter o' Sir Edmund an' Lady Julia, that ris you and yours first from the kitchin to the dhrawin'-room. Smoke that in yer pipe, ye ongrateful naiger," she concluded vehemently, as he made his egress through the gate.

It was somewhat better than an hour after night-fall that day, that Ellen knelt in prayer, after having enjoyed, for some time alone, the delicious summer twilight in front of the cottage. She knelt before a small ivory crucifix—one of the most treasured relics of her beloved mother—and, God forgive her, if her thoughts were involuntarily wandering from her orisons to the recollection of that mother, when she was startled by a near step, and, before she could even scream, a large cloak was folded about her, her head muffled up so as to drown her voice, and she was borne by two men from the cottage, without the capability of making any resistance, or uttering an alarm, even were there persons in her neighbourhood disposed or bold enough to venture to her rescue. At the same instant Katty was seized by two others of the party, who had contrived to open the door noiselessly, and who, before she could utter a single cry, had the poor old creature tied to a large table and her mouth gagged, so that she was unable either to move or shout for assistance.

To Ellen's inquiries, by whose authority she was borne from her home at that hour, and after so lawless a fashion, and whither was her destination, her abductors returned no answer. But, on reaching the main road from the little by-path that led to the cottage, she was lifted in front of a horseman who,

with three others, was waiting to receive her, and their comrades also mounting the horses that had been held for them, she overheard directions given to proceed to the castle.

As she was being lifted on horseback, a voice said distinctly in her ear, "have courage and hope, Miss Lynch, you will have true friends near you."

She could not know whether the voice proceeded from one of the party, or from some friend who had witnessed the proceedings and ventured for a moment among them; but the tones, distinct, though not loud, struck her as being familiar, and the cheering sympathy they expressed inspired both hope and courage in that moment of peril and doubt.

"Ha! we're watched," said one of the men who had overheard the words, as, with two others, he dashed to the hedge, from behind which the voice had evidently proceeded. But clouds had gathered over the face of the heavens, and nothing could they distinguish. "We have no time to be searching," observed the leader, "our errand's done, and our business now's to return as fast as we can."

Accordingly the party instantly set forward for the castle at a rapid pace, with Ellen between the two front men.

"Then God and the Ver——, that is, the blessin' o' God on ye for the words to that darlin' young lady, anyhow; may the saints intherfere—the Saviour purtect her night and day," said our old acquaintance, Ned Cormick, starting from the shelter of a tree adjacent to the hedge, and addressing Bessy Andrews, who had risen from her couchant posture as the party galloped off; for she it was who, having witnessed the abduction, after having been foiled in

her endeavours to gain access, unperceived, to her father's, could not control herself, at the moment, from giving utterance to the words.

"Who are you, then, and why are you concealed here alone at such an hour?" asked Bessy boldly, and in a somewhat disguised voice, as she recognized at once the tones of her old friend and occasional tutor.

"Why, then," said Ned, after a moment's hesitation, "as I'm sure you can't be an innemy, from your wish for the daughther o' Sir Edmund and Lady Julia, I'll just tell you at wanst that I was goin' on an errand to parson Gordon's, and wishin' to have a dish o' discourse with ould Katty, was goin' to the cottage, whin the gallopin' frightened me and cut short my perambulations; and, like another Tityrus, I went reclining *sub tegmine fagi* (if you understand the humanities), that is, I took shelter undher the beech tree."

"But you haven't still stated who and what you are," she rejoined in the same tone.

"Who I am—and who are yoursel'?" poor Ned responded in bewilderment. "That voice! surely it's like my little rose—;" he edged close up to her, but, distinguishing her sailor's garb, even in the clouded light, he fell back again, exclaiming, "Whew! God look on me—I must be dhramin'—God forbid Dan Heraghty should see me now and have it to tell; I have to apologize and beg pardon with callin' to yer remembrance that *nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*, that is, that no man that has a woman for his mother, is wise at all hours, dhruunk and sober. But the voice—my little rosebud—I'd a'most swair, if I didn't know——"

"I know you're alluding to my little cousin, Bessy Andrews, that has been always considered to have a likeness to me; and as I am confident you have a desire nearly as great as my own to serve her, I'm sure you'll manage to get me a few minutes' speech with her maid Hetty, alone and without her master's knowledge, which may greatly serve Bessy, and for which both she and I will recompense you."

"Recompense for sarvin' my little rosebud—pooh! But that voice, that voice—*vox et preterea nihil*: that means the voice and nothing but the voice. I'll do your errand any how. Why I'd go to the Styx to serve my bloomin' rosebud—would that spalpeen, Dan Heraghty, do as much?"

After having received some directions as to his best mode of proceeding at the foundry cottage in order to attract Hetty's attention unobserved by Aaron, Ned proceeded somewhat in advance of Bessy, who halted at the skirt of the plantation hardby the river. In less than half an hour he returned accompanied by the attached girl, who shrewdly guessed who the person was that wished to meet her; and it was only by whispered warnings, by pressure of arm, and by placing hand on mouth, that her mistress was, with difficulty, enabled to restrain her from at once betraying their secret to the old man, who again objecting to all recompense, speedily left them to pursue his journey to the parsonage.

Hetty now, in reply to the inquiries of her mistress, informed her that her father's displeasure was, at present, directed in a great measure against the young lady herself, inasmuch as that, his suspicions against Heavisides being by this time, to some extent, done away with, he was occasionally pro-

fessing aloud to himself and others his fears that she herself was accessory to the elopement.

She stated also that Bessy's intended husband, Sam M'Nab, had arrived that morning—a lean shrivelled specimen of humanity, old enough (in Hetty's words) to be her father, and who seemed at once to have acquired complete dominion over Aaron, to whom he had, almost immediately on his arrival, broached plans in her hearing for change and retrenchment, when the giddy runaway should have been restored.

Altogether Hetty's account of the newcomer, and the whole aspect of things at the cottage, was so forbidding that Bessy's desire to see her father, even for a few moments, was greatly staggered.

"He had always such an anxiety for my happiness, Hetty," she observed, hesitatingly, "that it would be a great consolation to speak to him, and receive his blessing before I should leave the country."

"For the love o' God, Miss Bessy, don't attimpt id—don't attimpt id; for as sure as God's above, if he lays his hands on you now, he'll not let you o' out this till he makes you marry that ould withered naiger; an' I'd rather see you, God forgive me, in your windin' sheet than his wife. An' then do you think that my fine, brave, bould Masther Frank ud take the matther quietly, or that there wouldn't be divlement betune himsel' an' your father if you're taken from him?"

"Well argued, Hetty, and I think she will take your advice," said Frank, as he joined them from the adjacent hedge.

He had closely followed Bessy's motions, with two companions, from the time of his parting with her.

though he neither could venture against the odds, nor wished to oppose his cousin's abduction.

"Masther Frank himsel', as I'm a livin' sinner!" exclaimed Hetty.

"Yes, Hetty, and here's a trifle (he put into her hand a couple of gold pieces) for your friendly advice and to keep us in remembrance till, maybe, we'd tempt you to give your sails to the wind and steer the same course after us."

"Sure enough, Masther Frank, I'd folly yoursel' an' my young misthress all the world over, if I wanst saw the intherloper clear out of the cottage; an' that 'll be soon an' suddent if my wits doesn't fail me; an' have courage, Miss Bessy, for if you wor wanst intirely gone, an' the intherloper backagin to the black north, yer father would soon cotton again to his only darlin'; an' both himsel' an' mysel' might be soon crossin' the seas to ye, that is if ye didn't come back to us."

"Then, Hetty, my parting words are that, as you love me, you will, for my sake, be ever kind and attentive, till we meet again, to a parent that, however obstinate to others, has been ever kind and affectionate to me; and as you are so, may God requite you."

"Wont I—wont I, then? And may the Lord and his angels shower down blessin's on ye both, an' make ye as happy as yer hearts can desire, till we see each other again, which, please the Lord, 'll be soon and happy."

Frank now removing Bessy with gentle violence, and accompanied by his comrades, moved away from the kind-hearted girl, amid the tears of the mistress and the tears and blessings of the maid.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MEANWHILE Ned Cormick had reached the parsonage, and late as was the hour was admitted at once into the presence of Miss Gordon, whom he wished to see first, on his sending her a message that he had something of importance to communicate respecting Ellen Lynch.

The fair girl was seated at a table, on which was a profusion of flowers of various hue and delicious fragrance. There were on it also scattered sheets of manuscript music, and many beautifully-penciled sketches, finished and unfinished; and nearest to where she sat was a paper on which she had been penciling some fugitive thoughts, and on which were apparent the traces of tears.

She bade old Ned welcome in her wonted sprightly tones; but it was evident even to his dim eyes that she was much and sadly changed since he had last seen her. In fact the insidious and relentless disease, which was feeding on her beautiful form, and wasting a mind as beautiful, had made great inroads within the last few months.

The rich glow of her cheek had diminished to a small speck of intense red in its centre; and the ivory hue of her forehead had assumed that unearthly fairness incident to her disease. Her bright eye had become more lustrous, and feature and hand had thinned but too perceptibly.

"I was comin' to you, Miss Maria," said Ned, after finishing a glass of brandy she had ordered for

him, "to beg my own mourneen—my Diana, to get his reverence to protect me from being turned out of my little cabin to-morrow, as I undherstand I'm like to be."

"And so he shall, or you shall have a refuge here, my poor Ned."

"Then may heaven's blessing be on you, by day and by night, my darlin', till you're an angel in the blessed choir."

"But what of Miss Lynch, Ned? Speak quick."

"You shall hear, my fairest of darlins. I was about to have a minute's talk with my ould friend Katty, on my way here, about my little lost rosebud—well that voice. But whin I was turnin' down the path to the cottage, lo and behold you! what should I hear but horses comin' tundherin' like the Throjans of ould. So, stoopin' behind a tree, I saw four of them dismount and stail like thieves down to the cottage; and I could undherstand by the whisperin' o' those that remained, though I was thrimblin' in every limb, like king Priam, when he saw the ghost, that some one was to be taken away. And sure enough it wasn't many minutes, though I thought it long enough, Miss Maria, till the four returned with Miss Ellen Lynch between them, and puttin' her before one o' them, galloped away with her like a blast."

"Take care old man; are you certain of what you say?"

"I'm as certain of it as that Homer was blind, or that Throy was sacked. Didn't I hear her voice ordherin' them to let her loose, and askin' them where they were bringin' her?"

Maria now rang, and requested her father to be

sent to her. He was engaged writing in another apartment, but he immediately attended her summons.

"Well Maria my love," he said entering—"ha, Ned! why something serious must have induced you to give up the cultivation of the muses at this hour of inspiration."

Maria now detailed Ned's intelligence.

"And have you any idea whither Miss Lynch was conveyed?" asked the rector.

"Why, your reverence, I heard them namin' the castle; and I suspect (sinking his voice to a whisper) it must be to—to Sir John's castle she was carried away, like fair Helen o' Throy."

After a few more questions asked and answered, Ned was dismissed to partake of the housekeeper's hospitality, and there after to enjoy the luxury of a better bed than he had slept on for many a month, as Maria would not hear of his leaving the rectory for that night.

"Dear papa," she said, laying her hand on his, after Ned had left the room; "I have a request to ask of you—the most earnest I have made since you permitted me to attend the dying hours of poor mamma." The rector's lady had fallen a victim to fever the preceding winter.

The tears started to her father's eye, as he rejoined, in a solemn tone: "Peace be with her, Maria: there are few requests she would have refused you—but what is your present one, my love?"

"It is," she said eagerly, "that you will employ every energy, and exert all the weighty influence of yourself and friends as strenuously, as if it was for the restoration of your own Maria, to recover from

the hands of her lawless and ruthless abductors, the gentlest and the dearest, though most ill-fated playmate of my infancy. Oh! were I man, Sir John, in this instance, though entrenched in tenfold his power and influence, should answer to me for the safety of my beloved and foully-treated friend. God knows what fate they intend for her"—and her eyes flashed with a fiercer brilliancy.

"But you must remember, my love, that I am a man of peace," said the fond parent, tapping her cheek; "yet, though I may not fight for her, I pledge myself that neither exertion, nor pocket, nor influence, shall be spared for the recovery of the dear girl; and Sir John may find—that is, if we can trace the outrage clearly to him—that, if not my own influence, that of those who will befriend me may be sufficient to shake him from his place of power."

"I should have known, dear papa, that your own kind heart would need no spurring; and, should she be recovered, were I to die to-morrow, it would soothe my last hours, the reflection how often she and you would speak of one whose memory would, I know, be so dear to both."

"Maria, my own love, you must not speak in that strain: you are agitated. The dear girl shall be restored, to spend many, many a day of happiness with her playmate—with us all, please God." The fond father kissed her forehead, and the big tear fell hot upon her neck.

"Dearest papa," she said earnestly as she took his hand in her's; "I did speak thoughtlessly, and have to crave your pardon for my selfishness. I should have gladdened your ears with the music of hope and happiness instead of evil boding. Yes, years

of happiness will still be ours, even in this life, I trust. But I must keep you strictly to your promise."

"Maria, you know I seldom leave a promise unredeemed, if within my power; and to show you how intent I am on fulfilling my present one, I shall, after concluding my letters at early morn, set out for the castle again."

"May the Almighty favour your exertions," she exclaimed fervently.

"Amen, my love," he rejoined; "and now, Maria, as you have been much agitated, and I am to be an early riser, I think rest will answer both."

"Good night, then, papa."

"God bless my child for ever and ever"—he kissed her forehead again, while a slight shuddering passed over him as the unbidden thought arose, what a dreary blank the world would be to him if, after the loss of her mother, his beautiful, loving, and enthusiastic child were to pass away from him.

Accordingly, at as early an hour as on the preceding morning Mr. Gordon made his appearance again at Ingram Castle.

"Ha, Mr. Gordon again!" exclaimed Sir John, as he met him in the area; "but not, I trust, on the same petticoat errand"—the consciousness of Ellen's abduction suggesting the cause of the present visit.

"On precisely a similar errand, Sir John, though a greatly more serious one."

"Surely, then, Parson Gordon, you seem determined to achieve for yourself the title of a squire of dames," said the baronet with a grim smile.

"What any man, Sir John, may choose to designate me for the performance of my duty is of slight

importance, indeed; but I am now come on a matter of serious, very serious import. The disappearance of Bessy Andrews, with the uncertainty whether she herself might not have been a consenting party, though it was, of course, an affliction to her honest and straightforward parent was, in other respects, a matter of comparatively slight importance. But the tearing away from her home of a lady so highly descended and connected as Miss Lynch (whose only crime seems to be not professing the same creed with us), is an offence that comes home to the bosom of every man that has a wife, a daughter, or a sister, and which surely must be sharply looked after by those who wield the authority of the province."

"You know, Mr. Gordon, I allow no dictation, and you are speaking in riddles. If Miss Lynch has flown, or been conveyed away, what have I to do with the matter? I am not as interested about the flight of young ladies as my friend, Mr. Gordon."

"Sir John, this irony is mistimed. I would not wish to address you in a tone unbefitting my own character and your authority. But Ellen Lynch was the earliest companion of my daughter, and I feel a deep interest in her——."

"Your sympathy for papists, Mr. Gordon, is pretty generally known, and to some extent appreciated, I believe, in high quarters. You seem inclined to increase your celebrity, too, in that respect—eh?"

"I care not, Sir John, while I am pursuing what I conceive the duty of a Christian clergyman. I have pledged a solemn promise to recover Miss Lynch, if possible, and I shall strain every nerve to fulfil it."

"Then, for what purpose came you here on such a fool's errand?"

"Because you are at the head of all authority here, and, of course, the outrage should be first laid before you for redress; and then, Sir John (in a lower tone), I think we have proof that it was in this direction the lady was conveyed."

"Ha! beware what you say, sir."

"I speak, Sir John, neither rashly nor unadvisedly; and more than that, there are strong grounds of suspicion that the castle was her first destination."

"By heaven, Mr. Gordon, you seem to have come determined to beard us. But you shall soon find that your hand is in the lion's mouth. The protection of the cloth you rely on may be soon withdrawn, when your zeal for suffering papists is more firmly impressed on the heads of the church."

"Sir John, your threats are as misplaced as your irony. I have never been afraid to exhibit my opinions or acts. But I have not come here to bandy words, Sir John, nor to stir up your anger; and, as I shall always speak openly and candidly, I suspect Ffolliot has his finger in the business deeper than you, as he was seen at the cottage yesterday; besides that I really can't conjecture what interest you could have in dragging with ruffian violence from her humble and desolate home a hapless and persecuted orphan. I appeal to you, then, Sir John, as the chiefest in authority, as a Christian and as a man, to order her immediate restoration."

The baronet's brow was contracted till the lids almost concealed the eye, while its dark hue was deepened to the blackness of night, as he said in that calm, collected tone, that sometimes speaks the

extremity of wrath, "I have listened to you, sir, uttering language that man never before dared to address to me. I always deemed you were a fool; but I now find you are a meddling and presumptuous fool, and you must be crushed. Know me, then, henceforth as your inveterate foe, and there never yet was foe of Sir John Ingram's that he did not find means to crush." A gleam of wolfish light shot from the baronet's eye as, anticipating his revenge, he uttered the last words with fiercer energy.

"Then, in return for *your* threats, Sir John," rejoined the rector, a good deal heated by the tone and tenor of the last rejoinder, despite all his resolves to be calm "as I cannot alter your purpose, recollect that, humble as I may be in your eyes, I possess friends—relatives of high standing, and who, I am proud to say, though we may differ in politics, would not for a moment lend their sanction to so lawless a proceeding as that I now complain of; and I give you fair warning that, as far as their influence (an influence, thank God, I can command in such a case) can extend, this matter shall be sifted with the closest scrutiny, and that, with my own unremitting exertions, it will go hard, if she remains on Irish ground, if the dear girl be not speedily recovered, to the disgrace and discomfiture of those who had the unmanliness to take any part in the abduction of the forlorn and unprotected orphan. We understand each other now, though I would still prefer appealing to you——"

The baronet stamped and looked as if he could have directed the summary judgment and execution
of the unfearing clergyman, that had been practised
his ancestors; but he spoke no further, merely

waving his hand for the dismissal of the kind-hearted parson, who forthwith proceeded to commence his benevolent exertions for the recovery of his favourite.

CHAPTER XXV.

SIR JOHN'S annoyance had, however, only commenced for the day. It was scarcely an hour after Mr. Gordon's departure, when a courier, in rapid haste, brought him a second severe reprimand for his remissness and want of energy in enforcing the penal statutes. The account of the attack on Ffolliot's house and the elder Ffolliot's death, had reached the executive with a rapidity not usual in those days of slow travelling; and the reprimand was forwarded with equal rapidity.

The baronet's study bell was furiously rung, after he had read the despatch throughout, and Shawn was instantly summoned to his presence.

"So, ruffian," said Sir John, as that worthy made his appearance, "it appears that I must continue to be persecuted for your drunken negligence of the business you are employed for. See here how accurate the charge is."

He read a portion of the despatch, stating that government had received a second communication, to the effect that Father Bernard Kilger and his nephew, were still openly and daringly officiating in Ballintubber by day and night, within door and without door, and that, as a necessary consequence, any outrage or assault on life or property, was not to

be wondered at; "but by the bones of Black Dick," concluded the baronet, in a tone of fiercer vehemence than he had at all ventured to assume towards Mr. Gordon, "if you have not the district cleared of both uncle and nephew, before another week passes, I shall take speedy measures to rid the country of you."

"But your noble honour, Sir John, how can I—"

"Not a word, ruffian. I give you a week. Make use of it; and, Ffoliot, you're come in time (addressing the latter, who had just entered) to witness my ultimatum to this fellow, and for other purposes, too," he added, as Shawn made his sullen exit. "Look at this morning's compliments."

The baronet reached him the despatch to read, and having strode from window to window, without giving him time to examine it, exclaimed impatiently, "How, in the devil's name, did the intelligence reach them so fast? Some scoundrel must be spying on us; and what can we do to show we are not sleeping on our posts?"

"I know not, Sir John. It is really curious—and to rebuke *us* for want of zeal, who have incurred the hatred, and provoked the assaults of the rebellious for our well-known and untiring loyal exertions."

"Then the cursed nonsensical affair of that girl," observed the baronet, without apparently having heard or heeded his companion's observation. "I wish the puling chit had been left to vegetate in her cabin. Do you know, early as it is, I am after having had a visit respecting her abduction from that troublesome fellow, Gordon, who presumed to beard me openly, and even bandy threats—so much the worse for him, if I am a true descendant of Black Dick, though the fool may be troublesome still."

"I, too, Sir John, have had my annoyance this morning on that score. That foolish boy, Arthur, has been ranting furiously for the last hour about her withdrawal from the cottage, however he received the intelligence, accusing me loudly of having been the planner of the abduction, and even threatening to fling up his commission, and set out in pursuit of her, unless she be instantly restored."

"Then, sir, I must say you have earned that annoyance; she will, however, be this evening in the hands of that pirate or smuggling fellow, on her way to another country, and then, I suppose, the young fellow's hot spirit may be cooled."

"Do you know, Sir John, that since we were speaking last night, I have been thinking that you were, perhaps, too precipitate in arranging with a total stranger respecting so delicate a transaction, and that we had better take a day or two to make inquiries—"

"Not an hour, by heaven," exclaimed the baronet, stamping fiercely. "Either she returns to her cabin to-night, or she goes on board with Jans Schrooter. I have been trepanned into lending my sanction to the forcing away a powerless girl who could be to me of scarcely any importance; and my determination is to make an end of the paltry transaction in the speediest possible available manner."

"But if the stranger should betray us, Sir John."

"Betray *me*, Mr. Ffolliot! I tell you, as I told the fellow himself, that no one dare *betray* me here, though an odd one there may be that, depending on the protection of his gown, would presume to beard me; and I would not, for a thousand pounds, after what has passed between us, *that* one should discover

that the girl had been here. I know also that, though a fool, he is a persevering one, and that, as he has stated, he has friends high in power, and who, I have reason to know, would not spare to hit hard at me; besides, that fools have sometimes a sharp scent."

"Then I see, Sir John," said Ffolliot aloud, after having muttered something between his teeth about wilfulness and obstinacy, "that it only remains for us to be circumspect in having her conveyed to the sea."

Some minor details regarding the removal of the persecuted girl were then arranged between the distrustful and ill-mated, though generally combined, pair; and they parted with no increased cordiality towards each other.

While this interview was taking place, Shawn was proceeding along one of the roads leading from the castle in sullen and thoughtful mood, venting curses internally on Sir John and both priests at one moment, and the next, pondering some scheme for entrapping the latter, who had foiled him so often before when he had been certain of their capture. He was in this vein when he saw approaching him attorney Baker, who was soliloquising in as irate and dissatisfied a mood as himself, after having had repeated communications with Ffolliot and Sir Robert during the past few days.

"Yes, the damned, close-fisted, grasping upstart would fain have everything to himself, and with the least possible expense," the attorney was repeating to himself, if his thoughts were shaped into words; "but curse me if I wouldn't work out the property for the baronet himself, thankless and overbearing as

he is, if I hadn't hopes that Adam Baker might manage still to edge himself in between both for at least a considerable share of it. Ay, the fool, Sir Robert, is running fairly mad, and what between dicing, drinking, libertinism, and the turf, together with allowing himself to be cheated by every one around him, he is, at this moment, sunk to his chin in debt, notwithstanding his broad, green acres—and gloriously green and broad they are (the attorney's eyes glistened at the thought); pity such a fool should have got them for shifting his faith from the Pope to the king, and praying to nobody instead of to the saints. Well, we must goodnaturedly try to assist him in his praiseworthy exertions to rid himself of their incumbrance; and I think a few thousands proffered in the nick of time, when the pinch comes next week (as his confidante, Bryan Gaven, tells me will be the case), may give *me* a firm footing, after which an entire deed of sale might be easily accomplished, if I should not be forestalled by that skinflint, Ffolliot, who has the money, and knows the value of the property as well as myself; Sir John, I know, is too confident, and will carry too high a hand to dabble in that underhand way. However, one comfort is, that Ffolliot, I fancy, can be no favourite, in any respect, in Lynch Hall. At all events, I shall watch his movements just now as closely as the hound does the fox's—

"Ha, honest John, something has disturbed you," said the attorney aloud, as he came front to front with Shawn.

"Why, Misther Baker, to tell the truth, there was the divle's kick up a while ago at the castle."

"On what account, tell me?" asked Baker, with

almost breathless eagerness. Then checking himself, he continued, in a clear tone, "that is, if there was no secret in the matter; if there was, don't mind me, John."

"I b'lieve the whole matther's no grate secret by this time, and so I'll tell id, as I'm sure *you* wouldn't bethray me, any how. Miss Ellen Lynch, as I could hear, was forced away from the cottage last night; then Mистер Gordon was at the castle a while ago, chargin' Sir John an' Mистер Ffolliot with havin' a finger in the pie; an' thin himsel' an' his noble honour had grate words I undherstand. Thin comes a letther from the governmint makin' out that mysel' an' Sir John was favourin' a couple o' priests here, an' of coorse helpin' the murdhers and disturbance; an' I lave id to yoursel', as a loyal man, Mистер Baker, whither that was fair play to *me*, afther all the times I vintured my life to show my loyalty?"

"Surely Sir John would allow neither himself nor you to lie, for a moment, under such an imputation."

"To be sure he wouldn't, Mистер Baker, if he wasn't intirely bothered; but I think the carryin' off o' the girl—whosomever had a hand in id—put him clane out ov his sinsis; an', to tell the truth, the matther is a quare one altogether, as Cornet Ffolliot tould me, afore I went to the castle at all, that he was quite sure it was Sir Robert that had put his sister out ov *his* reach, and that he should account to him for id. Any way, you see, Mистер Baker, I'm the sufferer."

"Yes, John, I see clearly that you are suffering annoyance for your loyalty, though I'm confident, if you act consistently with your hitherto exemplary

conduct, that your annoyance will be amply compensated for. But are you quite certain that Cornet Ffolliot had an impression it was Sir Robert that had transferred, that is, removed his sister?"

"Am I certain that the sun is shinin' now, or that I'm afther gettin' the abuse of a dog from Sir John, though he'll repint of id as he did afore?"

"There is no doubt but that he will, and speedily, and make reparation too; but don't you think it most probable, my worthy John, that it *was* Sir Robert that had his sister conveyed away, as she was acting contrary to his wishes—eh?"

"Betune oursel's, 'torney Baker, that's all in my eye an' Betty Martin. Sir Robert dosen't care a thraneen where she is. But wherever she is, they know id at head quarthers (the castle)."

"At all events, John," said the attorney, after a moment's pause, "I think it could do no harm, if the cornet's suspicions of Sir Robert were stirred up. I feel certain it would be well taken at the castle to direct the suspicion in that channel; and—and it might, or might not be an advantage to others too, and those that wish you well."

"Whew! 'torney Baker, I'm beginnin' to smell a rat," responded Shawn, with one of his villainous grins.

"Why, John, I always knew you had a good nose. I always, besides, appreciated your loyalty and zeal; and for that reason I suggested to you a service—I will now call it a service—I would not suggest to another, and which must be recompensed. Here is a yellow guinea, John"—he balanced it for an instant between his fore-finger and thumb, as if reluctant that he and it should part for ever—"yes,

John, here it is : every loyal man should be rewarded for his services. Meet the cornet at once again, and satisfy him that his suspicions are right. I am going to Sir John, and you may be sure my word will not be wanting to see you righted in his opinion ; you can just throw in to the love-sick boy in spurs, some sight or conversation that you witnessed—or might have witnessed (though you did not choose to detail them to him), and which will confirm him in his opinions as to the party by whom Miss Lynch was conveyed away. But I am doing superfluous work in giving instructions to one so noted for his tact and cleverness as my friend John. I will only say, not a word of my name, of course, to any party ; and, if the business be done as expertly as may be expected from such hands, the guinea shall be doubled—ay (after a moment's pause), and more."

"Long life to your honour ; it's you that had always the heart of a prince, an' so we always sed ; an' if we don't make the young cock—an' a dunghill one too if the breed's not improved—b'lieve every thing you like afore we lave him, that you may hear ov our bein' thransported for sayin' Mass—that's all I'll say."

The ruffian turned from him to repair forthwith to the cornet's quarters.

"Well," thought the attorney, as he paused a moment to look after him, "if that precious agent does his business rightly, a quarrel between the two fools can be, in no shape, a disservice ; and if it leads to anything serious—if either, or both of them should fall—well then, even such a mishap can't damage Adam Baker's chances. On the contrary, they are kely to improve, whether the suspicions and dislike

of the wise pair be only increased by angry recrimination and bitter words, or whether they come to blows. Yes! terminate the matter how it may, I cannot be harmed by it."

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON reaching Arthur Ffoliot's quarters, Shawn found that he had left them half an hour previously. But loitering about in the neighbourhood, he met him shortly after, returning from a fruitless visit to the castle, where he had been denied access both to his father and Sir John, though he knew the former was there at the time, so that he was just in a proper mood for receiving the ruffian's communications.

Accordingly a prolonged interview ensued, in the course of which, by adding to the threats he might have really heard Sir Robert use at different times—designedly mistating their periods—detailing, with embellishments, some violent expressions used publicly by Sir Robert a few days previously, and artfully connecting them with some appearances he pretended to have observed the preceding day at the hall, and still later ones (the mere coinage of his brain), he asserted he had witnessed in the evening, Shawn managed to leave not a lingering doubt on the mind of his eager auditor but that Sir Robert it was, and none other, that had conveyed away his sister. The ruffian had also by his, for the most part, fabricated narrative, greatly stirred up the angry feelings of Arthur against Sir Robert in other respects.

"Then, by heaven," exclaimed Arthur, as the

vile detail closed, "I have a longer account to settle with the villain than even I calculated on."

"But *captain* Ffolliot, jewel," said Shawn, with half-real, half-feigned fear, "I throw mysel' on yer marcy, never to let man, or mortyal know that it was me that gev you the information, as if that was wanst known, yer honour knows my bred ud be baked wid Sir John an' yer father, an' that I might fly the counthry at wanst, an' I hadn't the laste notion o' sayin' a word o' what I haard an' saw till I saw the cruel takin' yer honour was in this mornin'."

"The disclosure shall never pass my lips unless with your own consent; and here is a small compensation for information so timely and so completely in accordance with my own suspicions. You shall receive more befitting reward hereafter; and in the meantime have your eyes and ears about you." He reached him two gold pieces, the contents of his purse; and the ruffian took his departure, leaving his willingly-imposed-on auditor in a state of high excitement and exasperation, while he himself pursued his way with chuckling and exultation.

He had, that day, acquired favour and remuneration he could not have calculated on, with a prospect of still more of both; and, smacking his fingers, he said to himself, "the luck didn't turn with you yit, Jack; an' now, if I could pin thim troublesome thieves o' priests, an' get round Sir John (for he had no faith in Baker's capability of changing the baronet's opinion so easily, whatever the attorney's belief might be), wouldn't I stand as high as ever for my loyalty—an' who dare sneeze at me?"

Inspired by this exaltation of spirit, or, perhaps,

only recalling a plan that might have occurred to him before, while pondering over some hot drink he had ordered for himself, in a low haunt of his, in the skirts of the town, a plan, the most promising he had ever formed, struck him for getting at least one of the priests into his power; and he proceeded at once to put it in execution.

"Well, if you don't nick the vagabones this time, you may hang your thrade, Jack," he said, rubbing his hands, exhilarated as much by the conception he had formed as by the doing he had taken, as he set forward for his sister's, in high spirits and confident of his success at last. How little he thought he was rushing on his own fate too, while plotting and preparing the destruction of others!

Poor Nancy, was sitting near her cabin door, occupied with her wheel, while her children were employed, one in peeling dried rushes for the purpose of making lights, and the other in making lines in the ashes with a short switch.

"Mammy," said the elder child, "whin I take these to Mrs. Nally (the house-keeper at the rectory), maybe I'd get another silver hog (a shilling) as I did the time afore."

"No, Cisely asthore, I'm afeard you wont see the darlin' Miss Maria this time, as I know she's goin' to God fast. May the angels be her guide! an' ogh an' ogh, the more's the pity that so young a mourneen, an' so beautiful an' good intirely should be taken away, an' so many, that could be spared, left behind."

"But don't ye say, mammy, that she's goin' to God; wouldn't we be all happy, if he took us?" asked the elder child.

"Yis a *haskya*, it ud be well surely, if God would take such miserable crathers as us; but the jewel Miss Maria, had many comforts in this word itsel', an' was a blessin' to every wan near her. But it is the like ov her that ud go the soonest."

"Well, mammy," said Oisley flinging down the rushes and nestling her head on her mother's lap, "if we wor to pray to God, maybe he'd lave her to us still, as *you* say he's always too good to us for what we desurve, an' ould Ned ses he'd be willin' to lis'en even to little childhren, if we knew how to pray to him."

"An' I could pray too for the lady that ge' me the frock last Chris'mas," said the younger, placing her head opposite her sister's.

"But, my darlins," said the mother, stopping her wheel, and fondling each with either hand, "I'm afeard, if God's inclined to make her an angel all at wanst (blessed be his holy will), our prayers wont stop him."

"Sure let us thry any how, mammy. Ould Ned ses that good prayers can never do any harm; an' I was dhramin' last night that Miss Maria, was dhrest so grand, an' goin' to be married by Father Bernard—"

"I'm afeard asthore, as dhrames, they say, always goes conthrairy, that that was a bad sign."

"Maybe so, mammy; for in a minnit afther, I thought the bould, wicked man, that beat you and freckoned mesel' and Bawneen whin she was sick, was ketchin' me by the throath—" the child sprung to her feet at the recollection, and looked wildly round.

"Don't be freckened by a dhrame, a *chorra ma-*

chree, it'll be many a long day, plaise God an' the Vergin, afore that bould man darkens our doors agin."

Nancy was drawing the alarmed child towards her with all a mother's fondness, while she was yet speaking, when Shawn tottered in, pallid as a corpse and apparently weak as infancy.

"Nancy, you wor asthray," he said in a thin, weak voice, as he sank on a stool: "I'm come to visit you agin, sooner nor you expected. I'm come, I'm afeard, a dyin' man, but, I trust, a better man too,"

"Oh, may God and the saints grant id," she ejaculated fervently, edging at the same time Cisley behind her, while the younger fled screaming into the room behind the kitchen.

"Yis, Nancy, I feel I'm dyin', I'm afther gettin' a grate beatin' about the heart"—he gasped and placed his right hand on his left side—"an', though I'm a disgrace to yersel' an' all my family (though God, he knows, this misfortunate night, any how I was on no bad scheme) where would I seek a shelter but with the daughther o' my own father?—Oh, my heart—a dhrink, a dhrink, Nancy, for the sake ov our father in the grave."

"Mammy, mammy, don't go near the bould man—don't—don't. He'll kill us all," screamed both children.

"*Be the hush, asthores.* Bawneen, don't ery a chorra machree. Sure he's our own flesh an' blood, afther all, for as bad as he is; and maybe God touched his heart at last, an' that this is the blesseddest day for himsel' an' oursel's that ever kem."—The drink was tenderly—nay, almost affectionately—supplied; and after swallowing it he said, as if some-

what revived, "God bless you Nancy, you wor always tindher-hearted, though its little I deserve at *your* hands, sure enough."

He leant his head against the chimney side, closed his eyes and appeared to fall into a broken slumber, during which he started repeatedly, mingling heavy groans with exclamations of remorse and contrition, promises of atonement and passionate entreaties for pardon.

The single-minded sister, after having, with some pains stilled and somewhat reassured the frightened children, listened with eager delight to those apparently conscience-wrung expressions. Then both mother and children sank on their knees together, to offer up a whispered but most earnest prayer, with the object that God would grant, that, if her brother was to live, his repentance might be sincere and lasting, and that, if he was to die, the Virgin and the saints would intercede that his death might be happy, notwithstanding all his crimes against them.

"Now, mammy," whispered Cisley, in a tone scarce above her breath, after the prayer was concluded, "let us say another for Miss Maria."

"With all my heart, asthore."

A second prayer was offered up for Miss Gordon's restoration to health; and if the sincerity of the offerers could have obtained from heaven its object, the beautiful, the gentle, and the kind-hearted, would have felt the benefit of it, even in this life.

After having remained in this apparently disturbed slumber, for nearly an hour, in the course of which he had, more than once, managed to take an unobserved view of the effect his performance was pro-

ducing on his sister, Shawn raised himself a little and, opening his eyes, said, in a fainter tone than before: "Nancy, I am gettin' waiker an' waiker—Oh, my heart—will ye help me to the bed that I know I'll never rise from? My death is here"—he placed his hand on his left side—"an' I deserve it well."

The unsuspecting sister helped him to rise, and with difficulty—for his steps were heavy, and slow and tottering—assisted him to her humble and only bed, "as," thought she, "mesel' an' the childher can sleep very well round the hearth for wan night."

He was scarcely stretched when, groaning and writhing more severely than before, he said, in the same faint tone: "Come near me, Nancy. There's not wan undher the sun now, barrin' yersel', cares a thraneen whither I live or die. I'm afther laidin' a wicked life, sure enough—may the Lord forgive me—but, vagabone as I am, I have somethin' saved still, an' its the laist I may lave id to yoursel' an' the childher, afther all the throuble an' disgrace ever I cost ye."

"No, John. It was terribly got, an' I'd be afeard it—it——"

"It ud bring a curse with id, you wor goin' to say; but it wouldn't, Nancy. Whin it ud go into your innocent hands, it ud go well, an' help to rise yoursel' an' your infants from poverty."

"But, plase God, you will live yit yoursel', John, to repint thruly an' use id for yer sowl's sake."

"No, Nancy, the death is on me,"—he gasped as for breath—"an' little loss, if I was fit to die. But can even God forgive *me*, afther all the wickedness I did?"

"John, usen't the clargy—haven't we haard that God 'll forgive even the murdherer?"

"Oh—oh."

"I didn't mane to say, John, that you wor, out an' out, as bad as a murdherer, only that God can pardon even the worst ov us, if we repint from our hearts."

"Nancy, *you* may say anything Since the day you minded me, afore, how we used to pray together, whin we wor childher, the thought is, ever an' always, runnin' in my mind. Oh, if I could pray now whin I want it most."

"An' can't you, John? Sure I'll join you."

"God bless you, Nancy, an' forgive me, if I can be forgiven—Oh, my heart—my heart—*yeena Deea throcharya urrin'*" (God have mercy on us)—he struck his breast several times with fervor. Then, after a moment's pause, fastening his eyes on her face, and clasping her hand, he said in a tone slower and more solemn than before, "Nancy, I'd die happy, I think, if I could wanst get the rights o' the church. Is there no priest to be got for love or money, that ud raise his hands over me?"

"John, I don't want to aggravate you an' you dyin'. But you know—you know it was yersel' that lint the heaviest blow to banish thim ye want so badly now."

"Isn't that what's on my heart, heavier nor the baitin' this minnit? But, Nancy, oh, it's a cruel thing to be burnin' for ever—for ever."

A shuddering at the fearful allusion, came over his innocent and simple-minded sister, as she said hesitatingly, "John, I may be wrongin' you; but, fther all, I'd be afeard, God forgive me, even if I

knew where there was a holy man—I'd be—a'most afeard to thrust you."

"An' what betther do I desarve, Nancy? But keep in mind that I'm still yer own brother—the son o' the same father an' mother, an' that, as you said afore, we used to say our prayers together at our mother's knee, whin we worchildher, Nancy; besides that (he grasped her hand eagerly again), bad as I am, a dyin' man is like to tell the thruth—Oh, my heart! Nancy—feel my pult—it's nearly over," he ejaculated faintly.

He closed his eyes again, breathed more heavily, and, after a few minutes, struck his breast fiercely, and affected to rave as of absolution, while his harassed sister's mind was agitated by a severe struggle between doubt, and fear, and inclination. At length, a louder burst of apparent agony succeeding a short interval of almost unbreathing quiet impelled Nancy to set out at her best speed, accompanied by her eldest child (the other had fallen asleep) for a cottage at some distance, where, she was aware, Father Bernard and his nephew were to be located for that night; the latter clergyman had been sojourning in the district for upwards of a month previously.

She found both clergymen arrayed in the garb of female peasants, as she was admitted without ceremony or mystery when her voice was known; and, having explained the cause and object of her visit with some doubt and hesitation, Father Bernard said promptly he would return with her at once.

"Surely, Father Bernard," said his nephew earnestly, "you will pause before you venture within the clutches of so vile and dangerous a man?"

"If he has been a vile and long-continued sinner, then has he more need of one to awaken him at his dying hour, David."

"But, take care that the assault and the death-bed repentance are not altogether feigned, as a portion of one of his villainous schemes."

"If so, David, we must but trust to the arm of the Almighty; but what does his religious and honest-minded sister say?"

"Do not go near the villain, dear sir, whatever her affection may tempt her to believe or say," interposed Father Davy.

"Speak on, Nancy, I will depend my life on your truth."

"Thin, I think, Father Bernard," said Nancy, after a moment's pause, "my misfortunate brother is on his death-bed; an' I hope, I'm sartin, that God an' the Vergin's touched his heart at last; an' only I'd be afeard to advise, I'd say it's a pity his sowl should be lost for ever."

"Then, whatever comes of it, I will go with this honest woman, as well for her own comfort as to try to win one guilty soul from the enemy of man."

"Then, dear sir, if you think it right that even *he* should have a clergyman, let me go to him," said the friar imploringly, "as, should misfortune occur, my loss will be but of little importance in comparison with yours."

"No, David, though I know your zeal, you have not had sufficient experience to deal satisfactorily with such a death-bed as his."

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN accordance with this resolution, Father Bernard, accompanied by Nancy and her child, set forward for the cottage. Unfortunately for himself "coming events *did not* cast their shadows before." No presentiment of the fearful fate that awaited him so closely flung its heavy shadow over his mind, and he would, on no account, permit his nephew to accompany him; but directed him to remain on an eminence at some distance from the cabin, and commanding an extensive view around, to give timely warning, should other steps boding danger approach. He felt—indeed, believing as he did, could feel—no fears of personal danger from a person in the state her brother was described to be in by Nancy, on whose sincerity and trustfulness he had the firmest reliance; and he dreaded that the hotness of his nephew's temper would but irritate and, possibly, prevent the dying man from feeling and expressing that unalloyed and profound repentance required by his manifold crimes.

When the priest entered the little room with Nancy, Shawn was still breathing heavily and muttering some broken and half distinct expressions of remorse; and beckoning the sister aside, Father Bernard softly approached the bed, and was bending close over the pretended dying man when the ruffian starting up with a yell, grasped at his throat, exclaiming "by the glory of hell, I have him at last." The neck fastenings of the priest's cloak, however, gave way,

and utterly unexpected as was the assault, conceiving at once the extremity of his danger, he flung off the cloak and darted to the door. But he had scarcely passed through it, when the hands of the ruffian were on his shoulders, and he was pulled to the ground beneath the powerful grasp. Father Bernard's frame, though slight, was, however, inured to exercise and peculiarly active for his years, and he struggled with desperate energy while Nancy, excited and emboldened by the emergency, boldly seized her vile brother by the collar with both hands, so that, the next moment Father Bernard was freed from his grasp, and gathering himself up from his prostrate position, despite his assailant's exertions. Rendered more infuriate by this check, Shawn, at the same moment, flung his sister violently from him and, grappling with his victim again, prostrated him once more, and was trying to place a knee on his chest when Nancy, acquiring further courage from the imminence of the priest's danger, struck the ruffian on the hands with her tongs, which made him relax his grasp for an instant; and, profiting of the momentary intermission, Father Bernard regained his feet with a celerity only desperate fear could have lent him, and, striking his assailant one powerful blow on the temple, with clenched hand, sprang towards the outer door.

All the savageness of Shawn's murderous nature was now, however, aroused by the unexpected struggle and the blows he had received, as well as by the fearful screaming of the mother and children, which might draw some stragglers to the cabin, if the struggle was not promptly terminated; and, recovering himself instantly, he drew from his breast a dagger, which he generally carried about him.

Father Bernard might, notwithstanding, have still escaped but that, in his headlong haste, he stumbled against one of the children that was standing in the doorway, and who, unfortunately sinking beneath the shock, brought him down beside her. The screams now rose louder and wilder; and before Father Bernard could move to offer any defence, the murderous ruffian plunged the dagger blade twice in his neck, shouting, with a fearful imprecation, "to heaven or to hell with you now, as you wouldn't surrindher quietly."

The blood spouted on the face and clothes of the child that, shrinking back and gathering herself up, remained as silent as the murdered man himself, who never spoke after receiving the blow. He merely uttered a single groan of mortal agony, and flung out his limbs once convulsively, and all was over. The threshold was overflowed with his life's blood and with its ebb passed away to that remote land—yet how brief the passage—where proscription and persecution are unknown—a spirit burning with as high an enthusiasm for the faith of its fathers, and as pure and warm a zeal for country, as ever glowed within a human breast. The murderer, after having inflicted the fatal blow, deliberately wiped the dagger blade and, shaking it towards his sister, walked coolly away, swearing that if she uttered another shout while he was within hearing, he would return and bury it in *her* body too. Nancy, however, required no such threat to prevent her from giving an alarm at once. She was incapable of sound or motion. Mute and rigid, as if she had been turned to marble on the spot, she stood erect, with arms outstretched and eyes fastened on the bloody spectacle at her

threshold, while the bloodstained child crept noiselessly to her side from beside the corpse, and the other joined her from the room with equal noiselessness.

When she had recovered somewhat from her waking trance, she fell on her knees, and wildly and passionately implored the virgin and the saints to intercede, and the Saviour to grant, that the curse of the Almighty might not pursue herself and her children for ever, for her having been the means of tempting the holy man into her *now* desecrated cabin, and for having a brother whose name was to be accursed to all posterity.

After having prayed for a few moments she arose and prepared to go to the rectory, to detail her fearful intelligence. With averted head, she placed her only quilt over the body; and still, in passing out, she recoiled thrice shudderingly from the threshold, and it was only by covering her eyes with her hands that she at length brought herself to step over the body.

It was nearly an hour after the terrible deed had been done, that the benevolent rector was informed of the murder, by the still terrified mother, who was accompanied by both her children—the friar, having been obliged to retire to some distance from his station by the approach of some horsemen on the neighbouring road, had neither heard the screams, loud and wild as they had been, nor observed the departure of the murderer.

Mr. Gordon was greatly shocked and enraged by the terrible and unprovoked crime. He made the titated woman repeat the nature of the assault and utter absence of all necessity for the bloody deed,

at the broken intervals her agitation would permit, and in a low tone, lest they should disturb his slumbering daughter, who was sinking fast. Then penciling down her information accurately, he said earnestly, "with this evidence it will be hard if we have not justice done on even such a murderer as Shawn, either through Sir John or higher authorities."

The somewhat re-assured mother, having now disburthened herself of her fearful information, and been supplied with some much needed refreshment for herself and children, returned with them to the cabin under the protection of Mr. Gordon's stout servant, armed to the teeth.

By this time some of the nearest of her scattered female neighbours had ventured into the cottage; and, by her directions—for she could not bring herself to put her own hands on the body—the ceremonials customary immediately after death were bestowed on it. The murdered man was "washed and laid out" as decently as the humble materials afforded by the cabin or the neighbouring ones would permit, amid the low but vehement and reiterated imprecations of the females on the actor of the bloody deed.

The wake, however, was, of course, much more thinly attended than even had been Sir Edmund's, particularly as the near road was patrolled by a party sent by Sir John, on hearing of the occurrence, lest there should be any outburst in consequence. Even Father Davy, though he performed a tearful Mass for the dead with a few of the peasants by the lake-side, was prevailed on not to venture into the cabin, anxious as he was to behold the venerated dead before he should be coffined. As the mists, however, began

to rise slowly from the bosom of the lake, as if reluctant to unveil her beauties, and the grey dawn succeeded the faint starlight—this was the hour arranged for the burial by the few wake attendants as being that most appropriate for concealment—he did venture in to attend the funeral, disguised in the cloak and head gear of a female; and, in less than half an hour after, the small procession was on its way to the abbey. But so little compunction did Shawn feel for the fearful and unprovoked murder of the previous day—so little apprehension had he for the consequences—so greedy was he still for further accursed gains, and so accurate was his information, that the procession had scarcely reached half-way to the abbey when, springing over a hedge, the murderer grasped at the disguised friar, shouting aloud, “so my bould priest ye’re nicked at last, in spite o’ yer cloak; an’ blazes to me,” he added, grasping that garment still tighter; “but I’ll thry to pay you, afore we part, what I owe you for the heavy knock down outside the storehouse long ago.”

Little he deemed, while he was thus pursuing his triumphs (as he thought) that he was rushing to meet a retribution, terrible almost as even his crimes, though not in accordance with the legal ordeal the worthy rector was, at that moment, debating how he could manage to have him subjected to, with the best prospect of obtaining justice.

“Run, Father Davy, for the love o’ the vergin—run for yer life,” exclaimed two of the females simultaneously, as they flung themselves together round the murderer, while the priest, yielding his cloak quietly, and flinging off his cap, sprang forward a couple of paces—then stood for an instant with

clenched teeth and contracted brow, as if determined to measure strength with the murderer, and try to obtain revenge, at all risks, for the butchery of his uncle. But a momentary glance showed him that the male portion of the procession had melted away, like shadows before the presence of the murderer, while the clatter of horses' hoofs in the distance, proved that the patrol had not yet left their post; and, turning him round reluctantly, he betook himself to flight, just as Shawn had shaken off the women, with imprecations.

And now commenced a flight and a pursuit for life and death. Fear, and the natural desire of preserving life and liberty, as usual lent wings to the friar, who bounded over hedges, swept through fields and sprung across bog drains, with a fleetness and agility, which the nature and occasion of his flight alone could have enabled a person of his fulness of body to exert.

In vain the ruffian shouted vehemently and repeatedly, "If you don't stop this instant, by the glory of hell you're as dead as a mackerel," as he came bounding on his track—for the murderer's form was far more agile and inured to exercise than the fugitive's. The words but gave additional speed to the friar; and the pistol presented by the ruffian had been rendered harmless by some friendly hand during the night—the same hand had also managed to abstract from his breast the long knife or dagger he generally carried there. So on they swept in their desperate race, pursuer and pursued, the former gaining somewhat, but slowly, on the latter, till they reached Aaron Andrews' cottage.

Early as was the hour, the honest founder was

abroad ; for, since his daughter's flight, his nights had been restless, and his usually early habits rendered earlier in consequence.

"Stop the dog ov a priest—stop him," shouted the ruffian, "stop him, I command you, Aaron Andrews, if you're a loyal man."

"That's your vile trade, ye rascal, na mine ; and I've mony a thing else till mind," observed the sturdy founder, placing his hands in his pockets, and walking deliberately into his cottage.

"Thin, eternal blazes to me, but you'll be soon brought over the coals for this, masther Aaron," exclaimed the murderer, as he continued his chase.

Onward again swept the race, but with somewhat altered positions between the parties. The pursuer had lost some time by hailing Andrews, and the pursued had profited of it, so as to increase a little the distance between them. But, unfortunately for the *pursuer*, who was destined to meet that hour a long-provoked fate, the advantage on the friar's part was but momentary ; for, in flying through the plantation his foot struck against the root of a thorn that had been hewed down, and he was pitched forward violently to some yard's distance. He regained his footing almost instantly, but his leg had been hurt ; and his pace was so much crippled in consequence, that he had barely cleared the little plantation, when the murderer's grasp was again on his collar, and both, after a brief but fierce struggle came to the ground together.

A third party, however, had been added to the race. Johnny M'Cann had observed the chase from the hill to the rear of the cottage, and distinguishing the parties, the first glimpse he had of them had darted

off in their wake at the top of his speed. He had to cross the stream, however, to be on the same side with them, and was, in consequence, some sixty yards in their rear, when he saw pursuer and pursued grapple and fall together. Instantly he strained every nerve to reach them, before Shawn could add another murder to his blood-guiltiness, shouting, at the same time, "The skene (knife) Father Davy—the skene—the skene."

The words came at the critical moment, and substituted the murderer in intent for the intended victim. After an instant's struggle on the sward, the friar was under and Shawn over him, with one hand grasping his throat, and the other in the act of being uplifted to stun him with the pistol butt, when the shout reached Father Davy's ears; and profiting of the suggestion, he managed to draw from his breast a long knife, given to him by M'Cann himself, and, with the rapidity of thought, plunged it with desperate force into the murderer's side. The pistol dropped from the powerless hand, and the wretch himself fell across the friar's body in the death agony.

The latter had barely shaken off the almost lifeless incumbrance, and was standing gazing on it, as if utterly bewildered by the deed he had done in self-defence, when M'Cann came up, and drawing forth the knife, with which welled-forth the life-stream, plunged it thrice with fierce rapidity into the body, exclaiming, at the same time, with eager fierceness, "Murderin' dog, look who's stabbing you, and know me before your soul's in eternal perdition. It's me, Andrew Higgins, the nephew of Father Terence, that lost his life through your means. It's

me that balked you of your victim for that time on the abbey roof—that gave Sir John the intelligence of your being in your sister's house the same night, with Father Bernard, and afterwards sent the information to government about Sir John and yourself. It's me that watched you for years, by day and by night, to have the delight of lending one blow to help you to hell."

The bleeding wretch fixed his dying gaze on the ruthless stabber, whom he recognized by the passionate tones, so widely different from his peddling slang; and in that glance were commingled quenchless hatred, defiance, revenge, rage, but neither terror nor remorse.

And thus, according to tradition, terminated the career of one, the vilest of those wretches, fashioned and fostered by the demoralizing and deeply blood-stained penal statutes.

"The sooner we separate now, and that you disappear from this district the better," said the pedlar, "as Sir John will be sure to raise a hue-and-cry after the killer of his pet. I have not been seen coming here, and can take up my pack again."

Shaking off his bewilderment, the friar betook himself to a speedy flight towards the wild district of Joyce country, while the pedlar, before returning to his pack, leant him again over the body, to gratify the hatred and revenge that were, apparently, not to be appeased even by death itself. But, though the features wore the same stern and malignant expression that had characterized them in life, there was now no glance of hatred and defiance returned to his; and, after gazing a moment or two, he spurned the body with his foot, and, uttering an execration,

moved away slowly to where his pack was lying, often pausing, while within view, to have another glance at the execrated corpse.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

We must now go back to detail the proceedings at the hall on the day Father Bernard was murdered.

Sir Robert and his confidential groom, Gaven, were sitting with bottles and glasses before them, though it was but shortly after mid-day. The baronet was in a gloomy mood, for he had that morning received a larger number of letters enclosing accounts than was pleasant, each terminating with the comfortable assurance that, unless forthwith discharged, the furnisher would be compelled, however reluctantly, to take instant steps, &c. Besides, he was after having received a severe fall the preceding day, and sat, with one leg somewhat swollen and stretched at length, on a cushioned stool. Indeed, he had never held the same firm seat in the saddle since he had been pitched on the lake-shore, through the wild shout raised by the ejected cavalcade, as described in a former chapter.

"Well," said the baronet, in a gloomy tone, "that last race was a cursedly unfortunate concern, where I thought it would bring us out of all our troubles; and it was you, Gaven, you scoundrel, that tempted me to bet the long odds." He scowled angrily at the groom, who rejoined in an affectedly submissive tone: "Sure enough it was, Sir Robert,

raisin why, that I know Black Bill could distance the filly if 'twasn't for that cursed bout; besides, that little jockey was bribed by the colonel, I'd make my affidavit. But let yer honour take a dhrop o' this an' not be down-hearted; it's the best we got from old Vandurek this many a-day; if a man got a taste ov it on the lapboard, it ud give him courage to go through the rest o' the business."

"Why the liquor's well enough," exclaimed the baronet, after he had finished the proffered glass, "but still you can't deny that it was you that encouraged me to those last damnable expenses, that have nearly swamped me."

"To be sure I can't, yer honour—here's to your honour's success another time—but didn't I mane it all for the best? Take another dhrop o' this, Sir Robert, an' it'll divart your mind from all low thoughts about debts an' creditors—isn't it a rale mourneen? But surely, yer honour," he continued, doubling about adroitly to the former theme, "I was none o' the mains ov yer honour losin' the thousand pound in Dublin in wan week; an' thin I worked tooth an' nail again yer givin' the diamond ear-rings an' jewels to that damned little French dancer—hard fortune to her black eyes an' little ankles, an' her bows and chattherin'. Besides that yer honour recollects I warned you, day an' night, agin houldin' to that bubble bet with Fireaway Dick from Tipperary, an' tould ye, afore witness, 'twas better for you to have a shot itsel' with him, nor to be sure to lose yer five hundhred; not to talk ov—"

"Damn your recollections, rascal; fill another glass for me, as my own hand shakes since the fall, and let us have no more of your infernal croaking."

"Maybe I wont thin, yer honour, with all the veins in my heart. Why that's the way to talk like a man—like Sir Robert that was; whin yer honour has a couple more glasses down, you'll not care a thraneen for all the rascally tailors an' grocers in the kingdom, that ought to be proud ov yer honour's takin' credit from them, instead o' throublin' you with their impudent bills, sweet bad luck to them every day they see a pavin' stone. Here, yer honour, an' may you distance all yer innemies."

"Well I'm certainly getting in spirits," said the vile debauchee, after finishing the second glass.

"An' why wouldn't yer honour whin the sperrits is in you?" said the familiar confidant, perpetrating a vulgar pun.

"Get out you rascal, or my whip shall make you know your distance. But how are we to make out the funds for the present, as some of those dogs are, I know, determined to be troublesome? Bill Ffolliot—let me see—one, two, and two are four—four thousand five hundred, according to his reckoning, within a year. No, he wont go farther just now, as he made a great compliment of the last five hundred. Do you think, Gaven, would attorney Baker let me have a thousand on this pinch?"

"Why wouldn't he, yer honour, an' be glad to have you ask it, with the green acres for his surety, an' the long intherest; besides that it was only yisterday he was makin' inquiries about yer honour's welfare, an' how the property was gettin' on, mighty friendly intirely."

"I owe him a thousand already; yet I do think he might do another, as he has always expressed himself warmly interested for my welfare, since I had the

sinse, he says, to go the right side at last; and, after all, his interest is very little higher than Ffolliot's."

"To be sure, yer honour did the sinsible thing, what none o' the fools that went afore you (axin yer honour's pardon) had the gumption to do. God knows who'd have the property by this hour o' the day, if you didn't face the church instead o' the chapel, though, for the matther o' that, any wan that ud hang yer honour for bein' too fond ov aither, ud be committin' a murdher."

"Well, of course, Gaven, you're right, though sometimes I don't feel as comfortable as I ought about the matter, particularly in bed. Last night I had a fearful dream: I thought the old boy leant over me."

"Murdher," exclaimed the confidant, starting in terror, "was he in a blaze?"

"You fool, I meant my—my father." Sir Robert uttered the last word with hurried rapidity, as if eager to get rid of it; "his face nearly touched mine, and he said, in a tone that made my teeth chatter and my limbs quake—the terrible words I can never forget—" he paused a moment; "the words were 'apostate—parricide—the grave yawns for you—repent in time.' I thought I felt the chilling breath as if ice was dropping on my heart, and I struggled with the conceit that a mountain was on my breast. When I did awake, the hair was sticking on end like bristles, the perspiration was thick and cold, and the eyes were bursting out of my head. It was a horrid dream." He gazed wildly round, as if expecting to meet the visionary appearance again.

"It was an ugly dhrame intirely, Sir Robert, but

yer honour knows they say that dhrames, 'specially bad wans, goes by the rule o' conthrary, an' it's some good fortune you'll be sure to hear first afther it."

"Why the first thing I heard this morning was the flight of that perverse, wayward girl, and how is that good news? Unless, indeed, it should be that she fittid with that puppy Ffolliot, in which case it might save me all further trouble about her, audacious as the upstart must be, to aspire to an alliance with a Lynch, even though a foolish recusant."

"Whew! yer honour has hit the right nail on the head, as sure as the hound thracks the fox; an' its wondherful how you can make out things that way, as one might say in the dark. Sartinly it must be with the cornet she's gone, as they had ever an' always a likin' towards each other, barrin' that sometimes they daren't show it; an' faith the cornet's a well-put-together bit o' flesh, an' 'll have the acres an' the money whin the ould codger goes, so that may be it's not so bad a match for all the want o' blood an' pedigree—but take another glass, yer honour, to dhrive all the consate about that vagabone dhrame out o' yer head, and put spunk into you for the day."

"Pull away, then, Bryan, for I certainly need something to inspirit me, after all my annoyance by night and by day."

"Here, then, yer honour; and (filling for himself also), here's an impty rack and manger to him that doesn't wish yer honour as well as Bryan Gaven."

"I certainly do feel greatly improved; and now do you, Bryan, give the fellows that brought those letters some drink, and then, if they're not off while

a filly'd be startling, give them the pump, or set the dogs on them. To-morrow we'll try Baker for the thousand, particularly as I think that hussy, Ally Higgins, is getting the mastery completely over Bill Ffolliot, and that she doesn't half relish me latterly."

"Like enough, she doesn't, and small blame to her for it, yer honour, since she became jealous of your new collicien, Rose Slevin."

"How dare you, rascal, insinuate such a thing?" with a half drunken grin, asked his debauched patron, quite gratified, apparently, by the accusation.

"Pooh, Sir Robert, sure every wan in the barony, barrin the ould skinflint himsel', knows the value bouncin' Ally had for yer honour till you picked up with little *Rosheen dhu*."

"Well, no matter, she looks cold on me now, and we must try Baker this bout, if it was only to give Ffolliot breathing time."

"That's right, yer honour, an' whin we handle the kelthers (money), a fig for creditors an' dhramas while—"

They were interrupted by a loud knocking at the hall door, and the instant after Arthur Ffolliot entered the room unceremoniously, and in a state of high excitement, having been detained, much against his will, by professional duties, for some time after the priest hunter's communication.

"Ha! Cornet Ffolliot himself, by G—," exclaimed Sir Robert, rudely, and without offering the slightest courtesy to his unlooked-for visitor; "and where is the runaway, pray?"

"Sir Robert," said Arthur, seating himself, though uninvited, and trying to speak calmly, "you are Miss

Lynch's brother, and yet am I perfectly convinced, wherever you have conveyed her to, she has not gone with her own consent."

"Only hear him, Gaven; where are you going to, rascal?" exclaimed the baronet, perceiving that personage skulking towards the door remotest from Arthur. "But your attempting to put the saddle on my back, while we are all sure you were yourself the instigator of her flight, wont save you from the consequences of inducing to an elopement a daughter of the Lynches, however perverse and unworthy of her high descent."

"Sir Robert, this is but trifling with my anxiety. If I were acquainted with the manner of Miss Lynch's flight, or her destination, would I have quarreled with my father this morning, or would I be here now? No, Sir Robert, the public voice names you as her remover."

"And if that was the truth, who should have a better right to guide and convey her where I pleased?"

"No one, if the removal was with her own consent, and that ye stood on the terms a brother and such a sister should."

"Listen to this, Gaven—"

"I don't see what that gentleman can have to do with our conversation," and Arthur glanced angrily at the confused groom, who looked as if he would have exchanged place, at that moment, with any unfortunately-situated poor devil short of a condemned felon.

"To be sure I haven't, masther Arthur; will yer honour, Sir Robert, think o' what I was sayin' agin another day?" stammered Gaven, edging still more towards the door.

"Stay where you are, sirrah; surely I'm master in my own house, and know what I'm doing, though this fellow's assurance does stagger me, and he known to be the party most concerned in the wilful minx's flight."

"Sir Robert, recollect that though you may admit low society to your intimacy, you are now talking to one who has the honour of bearing his majesty's commission, and who, as such, must be entitled to the courtesy of a gentleman."

"A straw for your commission. I only know you as the upstart Ffolliot," rejoined the debauchee, the liquor and the excitement now completely overmastering any self-control he might otherwise have possessed; "and if Ellen Lynch has eloped with such a fellow, her name is henceforth for ever a stranger to the Lynches, at the same time that you shall be taught to repent your presumption."

"Unnatural and degraded apostate, whose name is a by-word for scorn and contempt," exclaimed Arthur furiously, all command of himself giving way before those insulting words, "not even your evident state of filthy intoxication shall shield you from giving satisfaction, and speedily, for your insolence."

"Satisfaction to such a dunghill bird as you! Gaven, tell my rascals to put this fellow under the pump."

"Coward and renegade, you presume, through intoxication and knowledge of my regard for your sister, to use words you dare not use in your sober senses, or at another time."

"Coward — my sister — coward!" the baronet roared, like some furious beast, stamping at the same

time fiercely with his damaged foot—"my sword, Gaven—my sword, ruffian, from the mantel-piece."

"O murdher, yer honour, don't you know yer leg is too sore to stand upon, and mather Arthur is—"

"My sword, hound, and not a word. My leg is firm enough still to enable me to let out his puddle blood—now at your heart, dunghill." He made a fierce lunge, but Arthur's sword was out too; and it was well practised in the "noble science of defence." The thrust was parried and returned.

Utterly terrified by the clang and the flashing of the steel, Bryan roared with all his might, "murdher, murdher, will no wan stop them?"

Alarmed by the cries and the clashing of the swords, the other domestics rushed to the room; but none of them dared to interfere. There had been, however, but a few more passes interchanged, and no blood spilled, when the rapid clattering of a horse's hoofs was heard approaching the house; and a moment after Mr. Gordon burst into the room, exclaiming vehemently, "desist madmen—I command you in the name of the God, whose servant I am."

"Gordon," interrupted Sir Robert, violently, "you are determined, I see, to interfere in my affairs, though you might be much better employed in staying at home and minding the petticoats."

"Speak not irreverently, ill-mannered and heartless man, to the bereaved father, that but quitted the chamber of death to prevent bloodshed, when he saw Arthur riding hither."

"Good God, sir, is dear Maria then——" Arthur paused and dropped the point of his sword.

"Yes, Arthur, the kindest, the gentlest, and the purest spirit that graced the earth has flown and left

me desolate indeed—O God, merciful even in thy chastening, breathe into my spirit that submission to thy will, and patience which, as a Christian pastor, I should feel, but which as a father, God forgive me, I cannot—cannot yet—” he bent his head in anguish and placed his hand across his brow, for a moment.

Arthur was so completely overcome by the intelligence and his regret for having been the occasion of giving an additional moment’s uneasiness to the parent’s bleeding heart, that even his anxiety respecting Ellen’s removal was, for the instant, merged in his sympathy for the bereaved father, as he truly termed himself.

Even the drunken excitement of the baronet was so overmastered by the energy of the rector’s suffering that, sheathing his sword without requiring a second command, he seated himself in a somewhat respectful silence.

“My dear sir,” said Arthur, taking the rector’s hand, “consolation I have none to offer you; my sympathy I need not tell you is yours, and oh, how deeply!”

“I’m sure of it, my dear boy. I know the departed angel’s regard for you, and it cost my lacerated heart an additional pang when I saw you riding so furiously in this direction, lest I should be too late to prevent bloodguiltiness.”

“Then, sir,” said Arthur, “I have to express my deep regret that any act of mine should have added to your pain at such a moment.”

“I’m glad, Arthur, to hear you, through any motive, regret your late rash and God-forbidden proceedings—and now, hot-headed boys, as one cordial drop in the bereft father’s bitter cup, promise that

this feud terminates here and now, particularly as I have reason to know that neither of you is cognizant of the manner or direction of Miss Lynch's removal, which, I can well guess, has been the cause of this blood-thirsty altercation."

Sir Robert sullenly refused to give any such pledge, while Arthur, considerably influenced by Mr. Gordon's words, said, "I pledge myself distinctly, sir, that I shall not further seek to renew this broil, especially as I know your words are not lightly spoken."

"Then Arthur, let us proceed to our differ destinations without further delay. To you, Sir Robert, I would say," added the rector, solemnly, "your course has been hitherto an evil one; and do not depend on your youth for lengthened years to repent and reform. Alas for human happiness! the young and blooming are cut off as rapidly as the aged and wasted. Be warned, then, at once by a father's sufferings, and call to mind all the agony you have caused *your* parents. May God in his mercy touch your heart, amen."

The rector and Arthur now departed without any farewell salutation from the owner of the hall, who remained sitting in gloomy silence. When they had reached the main road from the hall-avenue, Arthur proposed to accompany Mr. Gordon to the rectory.

"No, Arthur," said the rector, "leave us to the luxury of our selfish sorrow for this day, and give you not up your inquiries, though I am convinced her brother has neither cognizance of the manner of Miss Lynch's removal nor of her destination. When I shall have seen my—my beloved child in the clay (he gasped as if the words were choking him), I will

myself join you in the search, in regard to the dead as well as the living—may you be successful.”

He shook Arthur's hand with a mournful smile; and they turned their horses' heads in different directions.

Arthur was riding on slowly and sadly. He was deeply affected by Maria's death, though he had clearly perceived, for some time past, that the period of her dissolution could not be far distant, and he had made no progress towards the discovery of Ellen's destination, or through what agency she had been removed. He was pondering on those unpleasant thoughts, when the pedlar made his appearance, round a near turn of the road, and chanting one of his usual doggrel announcements.

“Wares to sell: I've wares to answer
The mourner sad or merry dancer.
I've wares for men—for ladies too,
Of colours all, black, green and blue.
I've breeches short, and waistcoats long;
I've finest lace, and canvas strong.
I've watches, breast-pins, knives and gloves;
I've jewels, too, a lady loves.
I've kerchiefs, ribbons, caps and rings;
I've scents, and other precious things
Too long to name—but come and try,
I'm sure your honour can't but buy.”

He stopped, and turned towards Arthur. But the latter was riding gloomily on, exclaiming, without even having a look at him, “begone, sirrah, I'm in no humour for your bargains now.”

“So I guessed, your honour,” continued the persevering pedlar;

“For sulk and gloom we're sure to discover
When a lady flies from her own true lover.”

"Ha!" said Arthur, drawing up his horse, and looking intently at the rhymester, "so you know of the removal of Miss Lynch?"

"There are few things occur hereabouts, that I don't know something of, but——" a man appeared at a distance, and the pedlar resumed his rhyming.

"Prime articles for ready money—

Ay that's the motto for Cheap Johnny"——

The man turned off the road into a bye-path; and, after looking cautiously around on all sides, Johnny continued in a whisper, "if you seek the runaway, try the coast near Kilglass."

"How did you get the intelligence?"

"No matter: find Jans Schrooter, who can talk much better Irish than Dutch to you, I suspect."

"If you're right you shall be liberally rewarded."

Arthur was putting spurs to his horse when Johnny, laying his hand upon the mane, said in the same whispered tone, looking round at the same time as cautiously as before, "purchase something, sir; there may be ears and eyes anywhere about us, and then all would be spoiled. Take this beautiful diamond breast-pin, your honour" (aloud.)

"For beauty of fashion and brilliance combined,

Its equal in Ireland, pray, where would you find?"

Arthur took the pin, placed it in his shirt, and flung down a gold coin, saying, in as low a tone as the vender's, "to-morrow you shall be recompensed as you deserve, if your information prove correct."

"Burn my pack, if you don't find it so," whispered Johnny. Then resuming his peddling cant, he continued, as he jogged along in a direction opposite to that Arthur was taking:—

"Sold again and took the money ;
That's the way to thrive, my honey.
When next my wares I to you sell,
Your honour, sure, 'll pay me well :
Prime articles of every kind,
With Jack M'Cann you'll always find.—
Wares to sell, fine fancy wares,
Single shirts and gloves in pairs.
Come, empty quick my well-filled pack,
And send me joyful travelling back.
Come, purchase now, my lads and lasses,
Before Cheap Johnny from you passes."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE rage of Sir John, on hearing of the notorious priest-hunter's death and the manner of it, was beyond all bounds. He traversed the castle like an infuriated tiger ravening for blood ; swore he would hang, draw, and quarter the slayer, without judge or jury, if he remained on Irish ground, and adjured the bones of Black Dick to evidence his vow that he would now, in earnest, exterminate priests and popery. He despatched a large party to ransack the neighbourhood where the deed had been done, with directions to drag before him any person or persons whom they might take it into their heads to suspect of concealing the friar, or of being cognizant either of his place of concealment or the direction of his flight.

"Yes, by the heavens," he exclaimed with savage energy, after he had despatched the party, "I will either have the murderer and his abettors, or I will hunt the bloody-minded paupers of that district from the soil—ay, rout them bag and baggage—and leave

vermin the only tenants of their levelled cabins. But maybe that wily old fox could assist me to lay hands on the perpetrator of the deed, as he knows the locality so well;" the baronet alluded to Ffolliot, the father, who still remained in the town, and whom he saw at the moment at some distance.

Accordingly, Ffolliot was summoned to the castle, and speedily made his appearance there.

"Well, Ffolliot," said Sir John, "as you were saying the other day, the times are beginning to be really terrible in this lawless region of ours. I suppose you heard of the murder of Mulloyny?"

"Yes, Sir John, a most active, zealous, loyal man he was. But I, Sir John, have reason not to be surprised at any outrage, however violent or murderous, that occurs, after the attack on Ffolliot's Grove, and the murder of my dear—dear—I cannot get out the word, and you will excuse my weakness, Sir John."

"Excuse the devil, sir. Who was thinking of your brother now? It was of another——"

"Yes, Sir John; it was of honest John you were talking—an efficient and trustworthy servant he was; and I don't wonder at all at your being terribly enraged at the daringness of the murder, and to be perpetrated so close to you."

"But can you aid me in getting the perpetrator within my grasp?"

Ffolliot was thinking of a studied reply that should express his own zeal for anything Sir John took an interest in, and, at the same time, show the difficulty of coming at the perpetrator—which difficulty would, however, be likely to be overcome by his exertions and ingenuity, when he was cut short by the loud

voice of the pedlar, in rhyming argument with the porter.

"I tell you, sir, I've wares to-day,
Your master would not send away,"

Johnny was chaunting with emphasis, when Sir John himself, enraged by the interruption, rushed into the hall, asking fiercely, "what scoundrel dared to make such disturbance?"

"Why, Sir John, it's only your honour's poor servant, Cheap Johnny, that thought some intelligence might be the wares your honour would fancy most this turn. But if you're too much engaged now, I can go away; and may be, after all, now that he's dead, your honour cares as little about Shawn, as about any other worthless carrion,"

"Ha, knave! then you know something respecting his murder. Come in, and have no secrecy; 'tis only Ffolliot."

After having deposited his wares with the porter, the pedlar followed into the study; but on entering he faltered and turned pale for a moment, on finding himself face to face with the dreaded Sir John. Compunction, or regret, for having witnessed, and, in some degree, advised the slaying of the priest-hunter, he had none; and fear, in general, he was almost as much a stranger to, as the gallant Nelson, when he stated in his boyhood that he never saw fear. Yet, still, well might he feel some instinctive misgivings in the presence he then stood in; for, did but the baronet even suspect his aiding and abetting in the homicide, speedy would be his passage to another world.

He recovered himself, however, instantly, and,

after having affected some hesitation about implicating the attorney, he stated that he had, the day before the last, overheard Baker and Shawn in high altercation on the road, as he himself was resting behind a hedge, and that it was some cotters, the attorney had on a farm a few miles from the town, that had pursued the priest-hunter's track, and, coming up during his struggle with the friar, had aided in murdering him.

The baronet, compressing lip and brow, fastened a fierce and earnest gaze on the informant, as if he would have looked through him. But the pedlar blanched not before it; and the baronet said musingly, "Baker—Baker—it's not possible! and yet the fellow's bold and positive assertion—you were here, Ffolliot, the day Baker and the murdered man were in this room."

"Yes, Sir John."

"And the priest-hunter was saucy and ill-mannered to the attorney—they were on bad terms altogether, eh?"

"They were, Sir John."

"And, though Baker was speaking favourably of him to me a couple of nights before the murder, that might be but policy, if he knew of mischief being intended for him. Attorneys are very keen and ingenious; eh, Ffolliot, what think you?"

Now Ffolliot, though he really gave no credence to the tale, had no objection whatever to let suspicion rest, as long as it might, on his friend the attorney; and he rejoined slowly, and as if deliberately, "Why, Sir John, 'tis hard to credit such an accusation against our respectable neighbour Mr. Baker, and coming, too, from not the most respectable

authority—you'll pardon me, my honest man. Yet we are all frail, and it is not all of us that can control our passions when once much roused; besides, that revenge is a passion that bears away the wisest of us. But after all, even should this honest man's account be true, it may be that rash and violent dependents of Mr. Baker carried his wishes—or what they might have mistakenly supposed to be his wishes—into effect, without his knowledge or consent at all; and——”

“Mr. Pedlar,” interrupted Sir John, “if you are giving us true and accurate information, you shall never carry a pack again; but if, on the other hand, you are knowingly and wilfully misleading us, by the bones of Black Dick, you shall dangle from the topmost branch in front of you before to-morrow's sun sets, eh!”

The baronet's eye and tone told that he was in earnest. Still Johnny (so we shall continue to designate him), quailed not to them.

“Sir John,” he said, “to show I'm telling but the truth, let a party go with me know—it's but ten o'clock—and before noon I'll have two of the murderers in custody, and with some of the articles about them that Shawn had in his pocket when he was killed; that is, if the troopers will allow me to have my own way, and go quietly about the business, so as not to frighten the lads from their nests too soon.”

So impressed was Sir John with the apparent openness and fearlessness of this statement and offer, that he ordered at once the desired party, and directed that Johnny should be allowed to take whatever steps he thought best, unless it should

appear that he was misleading them, in which case they were to bring him back as a prisoner, or shoot him without ceremony, should he attempt to fly from them.

"Now, Sir John," said the cool and self-possessed pedlar, "if you will also order a few men to be placed at the Cloondurragh weir, for fear the villains should be started too soon and try to escape that way, my head for it we have them back to you before two hours."

"Then, in that case, you can name your own reward. But beware of the other alternative—look up there"—Sir John pointed to the top of the tree he had before alluded to.

Johnny smiled, and, commending his pack to the care of the porter till his return, pushed off with the party.

"That's a bold fellow; I've been eyeing him closely those few minutes past," observed Ffolliot, as the party marched away; "there's no flinching about him, and he's likely to perform what he promises."

"Then, if we secure the agents, I swear to you the principal will soon follow them. But as I have troubled you so early, Ffolliot, you will stay breakfast in the castle, and remain with me till the return of the party."

Ffolliot made no objection—in fact, an invitation of any kind from Sir John was always a matter of pride and importance to the magistrate, and they adjourned to beguile a portion of the two hours of suspense in discussing ham, fowl, and pastry, wine, brandy, tea, and chocolate, with cakes of various fashions and materials; for the baronet's table was

always a hospitable and an amply-provided one, and the Irish style of living among the higher ranks, at the period was, if not refined, profuse, and, to some extent, magnificent."

Meanwhile, Johnny attached himself to the side of troop serjeant-major Heavisides, who, though not the leader of the present party, made one of the number.

"Serjeant-major," whispered Johnny, "I think I could give your heart some comfort."

"As 'ow, muster Johnny?" rejoined Heavisides, who knew the pedlar by sight and by speech.

"Why, what would you think of meeting your little runaway rosebud, your 'hangel,' pretty Bessy Andrews, afther all?"

"Muster Johnny, you must not be agoin to 'umbug people that ere way. That gal deserted me like as one wot 'ad no 'eart, after bringing me into a 'uge 'eap o' troubles for her sake."

The serjeant-major looked cautiously round to ascertain if any of the party were listening to or observing him, but they seemed to be all otherwise employed; and, leaning over the chesnut's side, he whispered to Johnny, "Through that gal I 'a been a-scolded and wrongfully confined, and yet I'll not disguise that she 'as my 'eart still; and, Muster Johnny, as you aint no 'ighflyer, but a man o' sense, if you'll bring me to a meeting with the gal, after all the trouble she's cost me, we may settle it all yet, and you'll be a conferrin' a favour wot Bill 'Eavisides can never forget, not by no means, damn me if I shall."

"Say no more; the matter's settled, and ye shall meet to-night."

"But w'ere, Muster Johnny; remember my hanxiety?"

"We'll settle that when I return to the castle, and see the blooming rosebud herself. But meet we will most certainly, this evening; and now you'll attend to my instructions when we reach 'the furze.'"

Heavisides nodded assent, and squeezed the pedlar's fingers with his gloved hand.

Speedily after they reached the spot called "the furze," from the exuberant growth of the "blossomed furze unprofitably gay" thereabouts.

"Now," said Johnny, "let half the party lie hid here behind the furze; and do you, Serjeant Heavisides, with the other half, come as far as the bushes over the bend of the stream; I will then proceed alone, for fear of alarming them, to the cabin where the murderers are, and when I sound this whistle, both parties will come in a gallop to where the sound comes from."

The leader of the party, according to his instructions, acceded to those arrangements; and the pedlar, having placed Heavisides and his division beneath the shade of the bushes, pushed on cautiously for a few yards in the direction opposite to that he intended to pursue; then wading the river, where a small eminence shut it out from the view of either of the ambushed parties, he flew at his utmost speed, and in a direction nearly at right angles to that he had been taking before, to a cabin in which were assembled no fictitious murderers, but Fergus Cormick, his father, Nancy Loughnan, with her children, and three or four of the party who had been wounded in the attack on Ffolliot's Grove.

"Tony," he said, as he entered the cabin

breathlessly, and addressing a slight youth, whose appearance gave promise of much activity, "run as fast as your legs can carry you to the old mill, and there give three blasts on this (reaching him the whistle), then run for your life till you reach the town in the other direction, as the troopers are on a false scent, and the moment they hear the whistle will gallop towards the sound. From the town you can proceed at your leisure, as *you're* neither known nor suspected, to the cave behind the village of Drim-cloon, where you'll find us, or you can wait for us if you're first there. The Swallow will put out to-day—but Captain Frank will send a boat back for us all to-night, if we don't get one ourselves, to the point of Kilglass."

The youth set forward, to perform his portion of the plan, at a speed that did not belie the promise his greyhound-like form seemed to give.

"And now, Johnny asthore, how did you manage it at all, at all?" asked two or three voices.

"Why, Johnny M'Cann, you're fit afther this day to be the messenger o' the gods, Mercury himself; and, as for planning, *sapiens Ulysses*—in the vernacular, 'the wise Ulysses' himself couldn't hould a candle for you," observed old Ned.

"But is the coast clear, Johnny?" asked Fergus.

"We haven't time
For prose or rhyme

just now," said the pedlar. "By Tony's manoeuvre we have nearly four miles between the present party and the troopers Sir John sent out in the morning to ransack;" he looked at Nancy and paused; "any way," he continued, "let us pass from this dangerous

neighbourhood at once, while we have the room. It'll be some time before the fat serjeant and the party return back this way; and, if we once reach the mountains without being seen, there'll be but little danger after till we get to the cave and the shore, and then good night to unfortunate ould Ireland for ever."

Without more words, the party set forward on their route for the coast, each bearing some little parcel—the only portion they were taking from their native land—besides which Fergus carried also the eldest child in his arms, and Johnny the youngest, where his pack was wont to be slung.

They traversed the well-known district beneath the shelter of hedges and walls, where these could be made available. They moved speedily also, though cautiously and watchfully; and, for the present, suffice it to say, reached their destination, without having attracted dangerous observation, or met with any serious obstruction.

Let us now, leaving them to their route, see how it fared with the deceived dragoons.

On hearing the sound of the whistle, Heavisides and his section pushed forward, at a brisk trot, in the direction the sound came from; and they were instantly followed by the other section, led by serjeant-major Broughton, the superior in the command of the party, and who plumed himself on being a step above Heavisides in gentility, as they were both from the same shire, where his father was an assistant in the feeding of beeves, while the sire of Heavisides was engaged in the less aristocratic occupation of fattening swine, so that there was a frequent feeling of jealousy between the parties.

On reaching the mill, without perceiving any sign of Johnny, or any near cabin in that direction, "Why, damn his eyes, w'ere is that ere feller and his cabin?" exclaimed one of the party: "I 'ope he aint gi'en us the slip."

"Not by no means, I'm sure," said Heavisides; "let's 'ave a sharp eye about, boys, and we'll soon find him. That man's as true as steel, I know—at least I think."

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Broughton; "but for all his whisperin' with you 'Eavisides, I can't 'elp doubtin' the feller. But let's hexamine well, as they do at court-martial, before we pass sentence."

The mill was now ransacked; the near eminences were climbed, and the bushes so completely laid open with the swords and pistols, that the birds flew alarmed in all directions; still no one was discoverable, and Heavisides' confidence began to sink considerably.

One of the dragoons now, applying his hand to his mouth, whistled shrilly, but there was no response from the signal-giver, who was, by this time, nearing the town fast.

"We must try that cabin yonder, I'm athinkin'," said Heavisides, doubtingly, as he pointed to the nearest house in sight, but which was still nearly half a mile distant.

"Why the whistle could never be 'eard from that ere cabin; but let us hexamine it, if you will, as a man wot's drownin' will catch at a straw," observed Broughton, with a sneer.

On reaching the cabin, however, the party found themselves as unsuccessful as before; its only inmates being two children and their grandmother, as the

parents, according to the crone's account, had gone to the town to dispose of grain and poultry.

The irritated troopers ransacked every crevice in the cabin, drove their swords through the humble beds, flung about the rude utensils, broke open the only chest the cabin contained, and clambered to the loft. But all to no purpose; no additional occupant could be discovered.

One of the party now proposed to fire the thatch by way of frolic, as well as to show the pedlar, by the blaze, the fate that awaited him for his treachery, when he should be apprehended. But the well-disposed Heavisides swore energetically that he would bring to court-martial, at once, the man or men that should attempt to commit such wanton and uncalled-for barbarity.

The plot and fields bordering the house were now narrowly searched, but in vain; and the party, after resting for a few minutes, set forward on their return to quarters, to detail to Sir John the pedlar's treachery, and their own consequent failure; some venting threats and execrations on Johnny's head, and others laughing at his ingenuity.

"Why, that feller should be made commander-in-chief, wot 'ad the gumption to do Sir John and hensnare 'eavy *guts* after," said John Bull.

"Yon chiel maun be the deil's bairn, as sure as my name's Donald Frazer, and ha' auld clootie's pass, to gang sic a gate and get awa harmless," observed Sawny.

"By the powers o' Moll Kelly, I'll charge him nothin' for this thrick any how," observed Paddy; "an' barrin' that I haven't the stuff, I'd dhrink more primin'-to his pan."

The storm of Sir John's wrath rose to a perfect hurricane, on his being informed of the pedlar's treachery. He ordered his horse forthwith, and, taking Ffolliot with him—who would have much preferred avoiding the visit—proceeded to the attorney's house which, as was stated in a former chapter, was situated in the immediate vicinity of the town.

"And did you so readily place credit in the most improbable story, and one so terribly affecting my character, told by a rambling pack carrier, Sir John?" asked Baker, by great exertion tempering down his tone and manner to any semblance of respectfulness, when the baronet had detailed to him Johnny's accusation.

"To tell you the truth, Baker, the fellow's daring assurance staggered me a good deal, added to my knowledge that the priest hunter and yourself were on but indifferent terms; and it struck me that some violent rascal in your employment might have helped to give him his *coup de grace* whether you wished it or not. But Ffolliot's belief in the accusation far outwent mine."

"Oh, yes, Mr. Ffolliot is very easy of belief, when it answers his purpose," said the attorney, bitterly; "but we may soon find an opportunity of returning the compliment;" and he glared malignantly at the magistrate.

"But, flinging aside anything concerning yourself, Baker," said Sir John, "can you throw any light on the murder, or show us any reason for that ruffian's deceiving us?"

"To say the least, Sir John, you did not act with your usual clear-sightedness in listening to, or acting

on, that daring and dangerous fellow's information. Why, there is strong reason to suppose he was himself aiding and abetting in the murder which, there can be no doubt, was principally perpetrated by the friar Burke, whom the priest-hunter was pursuing to apprehend."

"And the audacity of the daring ruffian to venture into our presence after, and cheat our ears with his inventions! But he *must* be taken and dangle, as a warning, from the tree I pointed out to him this morning."

"And richly he has earned such fate undoubtedly. But I fear, Sir John, you have committed more blunders within the last few days than allowing yourself to be deluded by him. You have, if my information be correct, mixed yourself up in the sending away from her own country a young lady that shall be nameless just now, through the interference of zealous friends, and who had themselves, of course, no interested motive for their interference"—the attorney grinned maliciously at Ffoliot. "To mend the matter," he continued, "you have consigned her to the care of so neutral a party as the Dutch skipper, alias her cousin, captain Frank, as they call him, though he played the Dutchman admirably both to you and Rorke, I understand, Sir John—"

"Hell and furies!" interrupted the baronet, stamping, "is it possible I have been so egregiously duped every way?"

"A fact, Sir John; but you have still time to redeem your blunders. 'The Swallow' (the vessel he commands) will sail to-night or in the morning from Kilglass, and if you send a party to the coast,

you may still recover the girl, and apprehend the *real* murderers, too, I suspect. So you see now, Sir John, I have means of coming at some *accurate* information."

"I will myself set out at once with the party. You will come with us of course, Ffolliot, in this case; and you had better accompany us too, Baker, as your information and ready wit may help to insure our success."

"A press of urgent business. (the attorney pointed to a pile of papers on the table) and the duty I owe my numerous clients must be my apology. Were it otherwise, no one would be more zealous to prove his loyalty, and lend his humble aid to oblige Sir John Ingram."

"I shall gladly attend you, Sir John," said the curate, who had just entered to consult the attorney in regard to some arrears of tithes, respecting which Mr. Gordon had latterly become utterly regardless; "that is, if I guess aright that your object is to apprehend idolators and rapparees."

"We shall be glad of your attendance, Dixon, as we know your zeal to exterminate popery; and we shall set out forthwith."

"Perhaps, Sir John," said Baker, "'twould be as well not to be too precipitate. These rascals may have friends in the town, who, if they see a strong party, with you at their head, set out in the direction of the sea, may surmise your errand, and have the intelligence conveyed to the shore by bog and mountain paths, earlier than even you could reach it. The day is still young too, and my advice would be at you would send the dragoons on before you, n by man, and with the interval of some minutes

between each, so as to attract as little observation as possible. Let them take the Drimeloon road, as the least public; and direct them to march slowly, and halt for you at the fort this side of the bridge, which is at a completely sheltered spot."

"Your suggestion is a good one, Baker: you certainly have a working brain, and your present advice may profit you hereafter. Come along, Dixon: the fellows shall be despatched in the order Baker advises, and we will lunch before we follow them, as we may have some hours' hard work after, particularly if the smugglers show fight—and here comes Rorke who *shall* accompany us, as he can draw a sure trigger, and because I know he would rather go on any other service, as he was as much deceived in the skipper as myself." The baronet smiled one of his grim smiles as he communicated the command rather than request to Charley, who was also coming to consult the attorney, and who was at first startled by the nature of the communication. After a second's recollection, however, he readily assented, saying gaily, "you know yourself, Sir John, Charley Rorke was never found backward to feast or fight."

CHAPTER XXXI.

CAPTAIN AYLMER, who was to command the troopers, was added to the lunch party. The baronet's table was, as usual, heaped with viands, dressed by a first-rate artist, and rare wines of the first quality; and the party to partake of them was in high humour to do them justice, with, perhaps, the exception of Sir

John himself. The spirits of Charley Rorke, exhilarated by the rich cheer, in his host's opinion—though we, who have, in right of our authorship, access behind the curtain, can distinctly state it was through a better motive—were particularly exuberant. He laughed, gibed, badgered (in his own phrase) the curate, and at last succeeded in his principal object—namely, getting Sir John into good humour, too.

"Well, certainly, this lamb, though dressed by a papist," he observed—"mounseer le kitchen is a papist, I believe, Sir John."

"Why, Charley, he may be a half-relapsed papist, like other people, for aught I know."

"Well, Sir John, whether he crosses himself with the right hand or the left, he's a jewel of a cook; don't you think so, Mr. Dixon?"

The curate, who had but seldom met Charley, and by no means relished his humorous habits, only replied, by looking sour and bowing slightly.

"Allow me to help you to a little tongue, Mr. Dixon," continued Charley, "for certainly, I'm afraid the pulpit and the papists have your own half worn out; don't you think, captain Aylmer, he is looking a good deal exhausted?"

"To tell you the truth, Rorke, now that you've asked the question, if he don't manage to recruit himself speedily, and amend his looks, that match between himself and Baker's niece—the five thousand pounder—will hardly take place this season, as I heard last week she was talking highly of that dashing cornet Beaumont, of ours; and you know, Sir John, what importance women always foolishly attach to personal appearance."

"I don't know, Sir John, what latitude you may

be inclined to allow Mr. Rorke at your table," said the curate, with blazing face and scowling brow, "but I'm not in the habit of bantering or been bantered."

"Pho, Dixon, use what's before you and never mind Charley. You ought to know he's a privileged rascal of long-standing, everywhere he's allowed to put his face into."

"Oh, many thanks, Sir John; when I'm premier I'll make you lord lieutenant for that. At present I'll avail myself of my privilege by drinking to the health of Mr. Dixon, and speedy promotion to him. Come, Mr. Dixon, a glass of this Rhenish 'll take the cobwebs from your throat, and sweeten your blood"—the curate looked again as black as night—"well, maybe I'm wrong once more. To be sure, I suppose the distillers of this wine are rank papists. You were in foreign parts, captain Aylmer, and can tell us."

"Yes, Rorke, I rather think they care more for the pope than for the king, and pray to more than we do," responded the captain, laughing.

"Well, then, I beg Mr. Dixon's pardon; for certainly, if I were as orthodox a Protestant as he is, I should have great scruples of conscience about tasting wine at all, and take to the humble beer that, I should be sure, was manufactured by genuine Protestant hands."

Dixon, who was by no means a Mahommedan, in regard to a quiet glass of wine, was utterly enraged by this last piece of banter. Turning round angrily to Sir John, he said in his bitterest tone, "Sir John, I claim your protection from this low-lived persecution. If this man continues his vulgarity I must quit the table."

"Well, well, Dixon, as I see you can't take a joke well, Charley must choose another target for his ball practice. Is that a good military phrase, Aylmer?"

"Completely technical, Sir John."

"With all my heart, Sir John," said Rorke, "as, to tell the truth, I was beginning to get tired of wasting my balls on so flimsy a mark."

The gaugernow commenced firing away his "quips and cranks" as his entertainer and the captain, who received them with a relish, heightened by the sparkling champaigne and rhenish, till Sir John, looking at his watch, exclaimed, "we have been here now nearly an hour, and it begins to be time that we should move after the party."

"Wait, Sir John, for one of my best stories about making a freemason," said Charley earnestly, who was most anxious to delay his companions as long as possible. "I question if I ever told it to yourself before: Aylmer has never heard it; and I am confident it will make friends of Mr. Dixon and myself again."

"Well," said Sir John, "as I think you are in a good vein for telling a story just now, I think we may wait for you. But make it pithy and brief. I give you a quarter of an hour for the telling (he laid the repeater on the table); and, meanwhile, we'll take half a glass of brandy, to brace us up for the sharp sea air."

There was no dissentient voice; and, smacking his lips, the gauger began his story, with the intention of spinning it out as long as he should be allowed.

"Thirty years ago, Sir John," commenced Charley, "we were both something younger men; and,

though my hair is getting grey now, you will remember I was then one of the rollicking boys, that it wouldn't be easy to get the match of those days; for, 'pon my conscience, Sir John, I think we're really going to the bad every year."

"How, sirrah?"

"Why, Sir John, I'd have to make a circuit now, to find a single dozen of six bottle or fourteen tumbler men, though, in our youth, they were as plenty as blackberries in a dry harvest; and if things are to continue this way, getting worse and worse, what 'll the young generation come to, for what example 'll they have? The fact is, I'm beginning to think, if matters don't come round again, the spirit and frolic of an Irishman will be little better than a name." Here Charley exhibited a ludicrous seriousness of countenance that, with his reasons for asserting the degeneracy of the times, made Sir John and Aylmer laugh outright, while Dixon regarded the humorous narrator with a scowl.

"Well, gentlemen," continued the gauger, "last Patrick's day thirty years, myself, and half-a-dozen other jolly fellows—that I must say again, it wouldn't be easy to get the matches of, those days—made a freemason in our own style, of Tom Nally, of Ballintaggart, as good-natured a *ludh* (milk-sop) as ever you come across—Oh, Sir John, it's a said thing to think that not one of those prime spirits is over the clay, this blessed day, barring myself, that sticks to his hold like an old tree"—

"No sentiment, Charley—mind the watch."

"Well then, Sir John, you remember that, thirty years ago, no prime fellow was right without being a mason. You may also have heard that the Nally's

of Ballintaggart were *then* right comfortable *scullogues* renting upwards of a hundred acres of good land under your father, at ten shillings an acre. I'm sorry to say it's few of their kind we have those days—the worse for the country. Then the war, too, was stirring, and everything brought a slashing price, so that the rents came as easy as kiss hand; and pounding and distraining were seldom heard of. So poor Tom—as simple and good a fellow as ever helped to carve a goose or finish a bottle—came into the town to clear his half year's gale and bring home broad cloth and carolinas* to the brothers—none of the family was married—and let me remind you, Sir John, that at that time the *scullogues* wore only the best of every thing—”

“Mind the time, Charley, and let us not have the half of those explanations.”

“Very well, Sir John,” continued Charley, taking his correction like a well trained spaniel; “and, to come to the point, you recollect Dr. Brennan, our leader in every frolic—I hope God has forgiven him for all his freaks, as there was little harm in them. Well, he chanced to meet Tom, and found out from the poor *gomeril* that he had plenty of money, and was very anxious to become a mason. So the doctor comes to myself, lame Jack Boyle, Dick Murphy, and a few others to explain to us how the wind blew; and soon after we arranged with Tom that he was to have the honour of being made a brother that very evening. Accordingly, at the appointed hour, Tom comes to us at the hotel, when a splendid

* Foreign hats, in contra-distinction to *felts*, the home manufacture.

supper was ordered for us, at *his* expense you may be sure ; and with solemn faces we proceeded to initiate him, and devil a mason was ever made, before or since, with such ceremonies. We first blindfolded him ; then blackened his face, hauled him about and scorched him, and while he was roaring with the pain, we half frightened the life out of him, by taking off the bandage and showing him Dr. Brennan, in the shape of the devil, with a long tail and a huge pair of horns, which Dick Murphy maliciously said, became the little doctor uncommonly well, he had been so long in the habit of wearing them—a wicked allusion to a fine, dressy wife the doctor had ; you remember her Sir John.”

The baronet nodded assent, and Charley continued, “ Well, after getting tired of tormenting poor Tom, we saluted him as a brother, and, soon after, were summoned to supper which was, sure enough, a capital one—such lots of fish, flesh, and fowl, tame and wild, with heaps of pies and pastry ; and then the fine show of wine and brandy and whiskey. Maybe, though, you’d think, Sir John, our modesty might prevent us from doing it justice : we got over, that, however, surprising as it may seem, and sat till broad daylight, as uproarious a set as ever saluted cock-crow ; and maybe we didn’t keep Tom in the moon all the time, with songs and toasts and prophecies of how soon he might arrive at the dignity of grand master itself. The next day was, of course, *Sheela’s* day ; and as Tom’s guineas—though a good deal diminished by the night’s expenses—were by no means exhausted, ye may be sure we stuck to him like bird-lime, whipping him off to breakfast at one place and dine at another, and introducing him,

during the day as a brother to Collector Dillon, the Rev. Mr. Armistong and Captain Mahon, so that poor Tom was as proud as a peacock. We had as good a supper that night as the night before, and for twice the number; and I needn't say, at Tom's expense, too. But, when we drink hard, we must have a head-ache; and when our money is spent, then comes repentance. In the morning, when Tom found his guineas diminished to some five or six, he began to feel severe qualms about the rent, and came to the doctor and myself, with a woful long face, saying, that he was afraid Hugh Irwin, your father's agent, you recollect, Sir John, would be so enraged with him for wasting the money, that he wouldn't give him time to put it together again. 'Is it only time you're wanting?' says the doctor. 'That's all, to be sure,' says Tom, 'if we could only get a few fairs over our heads, we could easily scrape up the money again, without letting Ned or Jack know any thing about the matter.' 'And is that all that's making you uneasy?' says the doctor, boldly. 'Why, you simple gosling, what value would it be to you to be made a mason of, if it couldn't do more than that for you? Isn't Hugh Irwin himself a mason—ay, and an arch-mason, too? and what have you to do but to throw him a brotherly sign, to get the time or, for the matter of that, to pay the whole debt if you require it?' 'Do you tell me so in earnest?' says Tom, brightening up at once. 'To be sure I do,' says the doctor, 'so be giving yourself no further trouble about the matter; but let us have a bottle of wine before you go to the office to Hugh, and I'll teach you to make the sign, by advancing one foot, as it might be this way, and having

one hand in this position and the other stretched towards him, with the thumb and fore-finger pointed so.'—Charley threw himself into a ludicrous attitude to illustrate his description; and the baronet observed with a grim laugh. "The whole gang of you ought to have got the horsepond and the dogwhip, after spending the poor devil's money, to think of sending him on such a fool's errand."

"Or a cool two hundred at the drum-head might meet their desert, Sir John," said Aylmer, laughing also.

The curate offered no remark; he sat in discontented silence during the whole narrative, wondering that the baronet could waste his time in listening to such trash.

"Well, gentlemen, to tell the truth," continued Rorke, "I had some compunction myself for the prank we were playing him; but we knew that Tom and his brothers were well off, and could easily get over the loss of money. Any way we had the wine, during the drinking of which Tom was thoroughly instructed in the manner of throwing the sign; and he forthwith set out for the office to exercise it on brother Irwin. Now, brother Irwin, you well remember Sir John was not the civillest of God's creatures, and I had a great fancy to witness the meeting between himself and Tom; so I stole softly to the office door, through a crevice of which I could clearly perceive how things went on within. Hugh was busy writing when Tom entered, and did not perceive him at first; but, by degrees, Tom approached nearer to the desk, and with a 'hem, your honour,' threw himself into the attitude directed by the doctor. When I saw the poor *omadhawn* in this posture ye

may easily guess I had hard work to keep down the laughter, that was half choaking me, while Hugh, recognizing the voice, raised his eyes from the paper, saying, 'ha, Nally, I thought to have seen you the day before yesterday, as usual—you are now come prepared, of course.' 'Your honour sees,' says Tom, still in attitude. 'Why, what the devil ails you, Nally?' says Hugh, his surliness beginning to rise. 'Dosen'tyer honour undherstand?' says Tom, advancing his arm and finger. 'The fellow's drunk,' says Hugh, in a surlier tone; 'begone, sirrah, till you get sober.' 'Dosen'tyer honour undherstand, in airnest?' says Tom, going still closer, and reaching his fingers near the agent's face."

"I should have given a guinea for a peep at Irwin's countenance at that moment," said the baronet.

"And it would be worth it, Sir John," continued Charley, "as he was shouting, 'out with the drunken brute,' as savage as a bear, on hearing which words, and the tone of them, I decamped from my position at the door, as fast as my legs could carry me, to tell the doctor, who was waiting for me, how things had gone with Tom. But I had scarcely time to finish when Tom himself came up to us terribly chapfallen. 'Oh, brothers Charley and Denis,' says he, out of breath, I'm done; I'll be distrained at wanst. *He* can't be a brother at all; he had like to ait me whin I threw him the sign.' 'And how did you make it,' says the doctor, as cool as a cucumber. 'This way to be sure, as you tould me.' 'Why, you infernal ass, if that was the way you stood, it was little wonder he should scout you. How could he ever take you for a brother in such a posture as that?' asked the doctor,

in an angry tone, while myself looked with astonishment at him, and Tom opened his eyes as wide as saucers. 'Wasn't it the right leg and left arm I told you should be put forward, with the middle finger stretched and the fore-finger and thumb closed? No wonder, indeed, brother Hugh should never have dreamt you had anything to do with masonry, when you went to make such a sign as that. But over, at once, with you again to the office, and you'll soon see how different a reception you'll get—though, on second thoughts, we may as well have another bottle of wine to make you steady and take away the tremor.' The wine was drank, and Tom pushed off to the office again, with more confidence than ever, and myself in the rear as before. When Tom entered again, Hugh saw him at once, and cried out, 'well, you rascal, I hope you have sobered yourself since you were here before.' 'Your honour sees,' says Tom, who was now really tipsy, 'that I've got the *rale* sign now.' 'What sign, you drunken reprobate?' shouted Hugh. 'Your honour sees,' hiccuped Tom, throwing himself into the new attitude the doctor had instructed him in. 'I suppose the drunken idiot has come in to insult me; but by the eternal — if you're not out of that in a second, I'll doglash you into sobriety,' roared Hugh, springing up and seizing a large whip from the desk. 'Murder, Sherry,' bawled Tom, without waiting to practise his sign any further, but taking to his heels at once, and passing myself, in his fright, without ever remarking me. So after laughing till I was half sick, thinking poor Tom had enough for his money, and not wishing to meet him any more that day, I found out that I had a publican to visit about a mile from the town.

I learned, however, the next day, from the doctor, that he had, after a long palaver, induced Tom to throw himself into a third attitude for the third time before Hugh, as that not over-civil gentleman was riding out of town, by which he was so much enraged as to dismount and give him some licks of the whip, that made Tom scour off, roaring like a bull. It was six months after before he ventured into the town, and a full year before he would open his mouth to the doctor or myself, though he easily made up the rent without letting the prank played on him come to the ears of his brothers; and ye may be sure he never asked to get a step in masonry after."

"Not with your gang at all events, I'll be sworn," said Sir John, rising; "as the poor devil certainly got a dose of you all. Well, I've heard you tell worse stories and better too."

"If it were I that got the dose," observed the captain, "I would have certainly administered in return a dose, and no stinted one in another kind, to the doctor and yourself, at least."

"Pooh, captain, my dear fellow, though we were a little wild, we knew our marks, and would look sharply about us before we'd provoke a charge from a heavy-armed captain of dragoons."

"Ay, the whole gang were vastly more knaves than fools," said Sir John; "but it's full time for us to get to horse, gentlemen; Charley's time is beyond its allotted expiration by nearly ten minutes—to horse—to horse."

The four were accordingly in the saddle, and on their road to the coast in a few moments.

CHAPTER XXXII.

It wanted still some two hours of sunset when the intended emigrants reached their place of halt and concealment. The cave of Drimcloon fronted a deep, solitary tarn, in the centre of which was a small island, crested with the ruins of a little chapel. About a hundred yards in the rear, ran a road leading to the coast; and behind a hedge, on an eminence impending this, lay Tony concealed to have a look-out, should anything suspicious approach. The party had some humble refreshments with them; and while Fergus and the pedlar, with two of the wounded raparees and the children, seated themselves on the floor of the cave to enjoy the cheer, such as it was, the remainder were too much wrapped up in their own melancholy reflections to partake of any.

Approaching the mouth of the cave, Ned looked out on the little lake and the ruin, and then at the sky. The early part of the day had been oppressively hot; but clouds had gathered and spread and deepened; and the sun was now, like an overpowered warrior, struggling to burst through the dark, dense mass that had surrounded him: but vainly. The wind too was beginning to rise, sweeping up its watery gusts across the little lake, and stirring up its waters into pigmy waves, just as turbulent as their giant brethren of the ocean, while the birds began to scream and circle, and the cattle turned up their noses to snuff the coming gale.

“It’s the promise of a wild night I’m thinkin’,”

said Ned, looking up again at the sky, which was momentarily becoming gloomier and more disturbed looking; "but what signifies that to them that's forced to lave their native country for ever, and in their ould age too?"

"Throe for you, Ned," said Tony's father, one of the wounded men; "it's a cruel thing to have to lay our ould bones far away from all belonging to us. But you're bettther off than us any way, Ned. You have no family barrin' wan son, an' he's to be with you. Now, God help me, I have to lave three behind to the marcy o' the world."

"Yis, Martin Grehan, I'm not so bad but that I might be worse, the Lord make me thankful. But, afther all, it goes to the heart to be quittin' for ever poor ould Ireland, where the bones of our forefathers and our wives and our childhren are, and the spots themselves and ourselves worshipped God in, and the fields we played in. Oh, where 'll we get a spot in the wide world like what we're goin' to lave behind us for ever? Oh, '*natale solum*'—but ye don't undherstand the classics; that quotation manes 'our native soil.'"

"No wondher," said Nancy, mournfully; "that ye should grieve for quittin' the country ye wor born in, when even my heart is heavy to lave id—me that has now only a name to be curst by every Christian"—she wept freely.

"No, Nancy, don't fret yourself that way," said Ned: "crime is personal, and the world knows you were as good as your brother was—but, as the ould Latin sayin' has it, '*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*,' that is, 'talk well o' the dead, bad as they were.'"

"But isn't id a murder intirely," said Martin,

"that, black as the times wor, we might still lave our ould bones with those that went afore us, if it wasn't for wan murdherin' family. Oh, the Ffolliot's is a bad *kinnaul* (breed) intirely."

"Well, poor Harry Gorman (God rest his sowl) put wan o' them out o' the way o' doin' any more villany, any how," observed his comrade rapparee.

"Yis, Dick, an' it ud lighten our hearts goin', if his brother, black Bill, was with him—may a mel-tation come over him and his—and that reminds me, that Tony saw him ridin' with Sir John, as he was passin' through the town."

"Oh, they're a *par nobile fratrum*, that is, 'they're fit for one another,' and from the bottom of my heart I wish them both *Thubbodh na lung's* (Theobald of the ship's) journey to Ballintubber."

"Well," said the pedlar, "what's the use of fretting and grumbling, as neither one nor th' other of them can help us? My motto is to take the world as it comes, rough and smooth, and never to fret; and to remember that

When the rain is thick, a change is near,
And the sun after storm soon will appear."

"Whew, Johnny," said Ned, "that's only makin' doggrel of a sintiment from the classics, what Dan Heraghty himself could do.

Resplendens sol———"

"We all know you could be talking Latin till the cows would come home, Ned," said Johnny; "and that Dan Heraghty's is but bog Latin in comparison with yours."

"Bog Latin inagh! It's no Latin at all. What

would the spalpeen know about quotin' Latin, that never passed *verbum personale*?"

"And that's the truth, to be sure, Ned. Its like the grace o' God to him: he knows no more about it than a Spanish cow does of talking English. But the spalpeen isn't worth takin' of; and do you, Ned, like a gay old cock, instead of wasting your Latin on us that don't know a word of it, tell us the meaning of *Thubbodh na lung's* journey to Ballintubber. I heard the phrase often; but, long as I'm rambling through this district, I never heard the explanation of it, and, if there's a story about it, it'll help to pass some of the time, before we can venture to stir from this, pleasanter than grumbling or crying."

"Faith thin Ned's the boy that can do that same story justice any way," observed Martin.

"Ay do sit down, father," said Fergus; "an' though you're in no humour for eatin', here's some rare stuff fit to dhrink farewell to poor Ireland in; an' thin you can tell Johnny the story." He reached over an ample bottle nearly full, from which his unreluctant parent took no stinted pull. Then seating himself, and waving to such of his companions as were still standing to be seated also, he commenced his legend which we shall give in our own words, as well in order to avoid spinning out our story, now so near its close, as to spare the reader the infliction of Ned's numerous digressions, Latin quotations and allusions to the gods and heroes of the classics.

Within a mile of Ballintubber stands Castle Burke, and at about double that distance from it are the remains of Kanturk, the most extensive, ornamented, and mansion-like of the baronial ruins in this county (Mayo). Both of those castles were the occasional

residences of the Mayo family—a family which, some centuries ago, possessed so large a portion of the fairest parts of the county, though the present Earl of Mayo derives nothing from it but his title.

Early in the seventeenth century, Kanturk was the residence of Theobald Bourke, the Thubbodh of the legend, and the son, by her second marriage with the head of the Bourkes (as was before stated in a note), of “the lady of the isles,” *Granua Waille* (Grace O’Malley) so celebrated for her daring acts of piracy,* and whose extraordinary character and exploits have occupied the pens of some of our popular writers.

Thubbodh na lung had married one of the O’Connor family; and we may readily imagine that the lady’s life, with a desperate and remorseless man like him, was not one to be envied. She appears, however, to have possessed a high and bold spirit, derived from the noble stock she sprung from, and which enabled her the better to cope with his violence; and he was still further kept in check by the power and daring bravery of her family, towards whom, it would seem, he gradually contracted an inveterate and inextinguishable hatred. Indeed so fiercely did the fire of that hatred burn that, according to the tradition, nothing but blood, and that shed by himself, could quench it. Accordingly, his evil passions, goaded to madness by some after-dinner taunts and idle boastings of his brother-in-law and wife—the former of whom was then sojourning as a visitor at the castle—he proceeded to put his murderous project into execution. So, as he had not courage to

* *Terra, marique potens* (powerful by land and sea) is still the motto of this bold lady’s hereditary descendants.

cross swords with O'Connor, and nothing but taking his life with his own hands could appease his mortal hatred, he asked him one day to look at the leg of a favourite horse which (he said) had received a hurt ; and on his brother-in-law's stooping unsuspectingly he, by a treacherous sword-cut, struck off his head, which he forthwith despatched into the castle for his wife's view.

The lady's feelings, on beholding the fearful spectacle, and learning the source whence it proceeded, may be easily conceived. Her deeds we are not informed of. But the fiendish act so stirred up the vengeance of one of O'Connor's attached retainers, that month after month he tracked the steps of the cowardly murderer, till he found an opportunity of burying the skene he always carried to the haft in his body ; and this bloody and richly-deserved end it was that gave rise to the proverb, whether Thubodh was stabbed in the abbey itself, as some state, or whether, according to other chroniclers, the retaliating murder occurred elsewhere, and he was only buried there after.

"Mysel' haard," observed Martin, when Ned had finished his legend, "that it was at Ballintubber, the grand castle o' the O'Connor's, an' that, in ould times, belonged to the kings o' Connaught, they say Thubodh was killed, an' that they pitched him into a vault, and left him there till the rats eat him alive."

"*You* haard! An' what would the likes of you know about such stories in comparison with me?" asked Ned, angrily.

"Nothin' at all, sure enough, Ned, asthore ; an' reason why, you're a larned schollard, an' mysel' loesn' know a B from a bull's foot. Any way Thub-

bodh never went back from Ballintubber; an' that's the mainin' o' *Thubbodh na lung's* journey to Ballintubber."

"Here's glory to the hand that gave him his due!" said Johnny, applying the bottle to his mouth.

"Why, if he was living now he'd be qualified to be a partner in the firm of Ingram, Ffolliot, and Co."

"Oh, he was a born divle out an' out," said Martin. "We have another story o' what he did to the widow's son, that all the imps couldn't bate out for cruelty; but Ned can tell id betther nor me, if you wish to hear id."

"Tell it yourself," said Ned, sullenly, not a little chafed at his companion's having ventured to put in a word at all respecting the former tradition.

"Ay, tell it you, Martin," said Fergus; "my father will be in betther humour afther another kiss at the bottle." His father looked as if he could have willingly gone back to former years, and applied the switch once more to his athletic son's back. "But first," continued Fergus, "take a sup to wet your whistle; an' while you're tellin' Johnny the story, I'll step out an' thry how Tony's comin' on, an' if anything's stirrin' abroad."

Martin, after having complied with Fergus' request, commenced *his* tradition, which we shall also give the reader in our own words, for the reason just alluded to in Ned's case, and which, still widely preserved, attests that, though Thubbodh inherited none of the heroic qualities of his mother, he possessed largely that remorseless cruelty so well suited to a sea-born pirate-descendant.

There was a widow among his serfs (the tradition saith not her name), who had the misfortune to have

an undutiful son ; and one unfortunate day for her, she went to the castle of Kanturk to complain to its lord of his evil doings.

" And he is so very undutiful, then, good woman," said the evil-minded and relentless lord, after she had detailed her grievance.

" Sure enough he is, your lordship, as bad as bad can be."

" Then I will put him from ever annoying you again. So come in, good woman, and refresh yourself while I manage the boy."

The poor widow went in rejoicing, and continued to regale herself till the voice of her master summoned her forth, to witness the change that had taken place in her son. Gladly she came forth to ascertain the blessed change. Bright and exulting were her thoughts of an obedient child and a happy fireside, as she stepped lightly out. But oh, what a spectacle for a widowed mother—the mother, too, of an only child—saluted her view abroad ! Better—a thousand thousand time better—her sight were blasted at her birth, than be condemned to witness the terrible object that now met her gaze. Her son was suspended in the death-agony from the castle door.

" I told you I should prevent him from further annoying you ; and you see I have kept my promise," said the monster, pointing to the swaying and struggling body. Instantly the air rang with appalling shrieks ; and falling on her knees, the wretched widow heaped the most fearful and vehement maledictions on the head of the ferocious chief till driven away by some of the retainers, and " never did a day's good during her whole life after."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE tradition had barely closed when Fergus re-entered the cave, accompanied by Tony and Shemus Fadha (long James), the young man who had been wounded in emerging from the Mass-cavern, as described in our second chapter, but who had since, to a great extent, recovered from the effects of the shot.

"Sir John, an' Ffolliot, an' Dixon, an' Rorke, is comin' up in a gallop, with a party," said Fergus rapidly, as he entered; "an' I wonder what brought Rorke among them, anyhow."

"Oh, we're murdered, we're murdered afther all," exclaimed half a dozen voices together, while the children crouched behind their mother.

"Hould yer tongues, ye ~~omad~~hawns an'onshoughs, (male an female idiots). It's the vessel Sir John's lookin' afther; an' isn't here Shemus Fadha with an account that she sailed uppards of an hour ago. Besides, neither himsel' nor Ffolliot knows anything about us nor the cave, an' we've only to stay quiet."

The clatter of horses' hoofs ceased suddenly at the bend of the adjacent road, and terrible were the fears and doubts of the cave occupants. There was not a face among them, with the exception of Fergus and Johnny, that was not blanched to death paleness, nor a heart that did not throb with mortal terror.

The pause of the horsemen was, however, but momentary, to enable their leader to have a chance-met peasant mounted behind one of the party as a guide,

despite the man's true protestations that he did not know the shore well at all. In an instant the clatter was resumed more rapidly than before, and continued, waxing fainter and fainter, till it was entirely lost in the distance.

The countenance of the fugitives now resumed their natural hue, and their hearts began to throb as calmly as usual.

"Why, Fergus, I'm inclined to forgive you your impudence a while ago," said Ned, "as you turned out so thrue a prophet about the sogers goin' away. God help us, we fathers are sometimes foolish enough; but *nemo mortalium*——"

"That's the truth for you, father—but," continued Fergus, after a minute's cogitation, "a thought's come into my head that maybe we could give the party a good sousin' afore they have the comfort o' seein' the vessel out o' their reach; could we be at the long sthrand, this side o' the point o' Kilglass, afore they get there, Shemus?"

"To be sure we could, in a throt, by takin' to the bog that's quite dhry now, crassin' the black sthrame, an' passin' by the ould monument; besides, that the horsemen must dismount, a quarther ov a mile, any how, afore they can get to the sthrand."

"Thin come along with me yourself and Tony, an' let us not lose a minnit; do ye (speaking to the fugitives) remain here till the party passes back, unless one ov us three comes for ye afore. Ye see ye are perfectly safe, an' need only remain quiet within, an' ye may be sure we'll keep out o' harm's way."

So saying, he struck into the bog, with his two companions, at a rapid pace.

"Now, my old boy," said the pedlar, after Fergus' departure, either wishing to derive amusement from the old man, as apprehension of danger he had none, or desirous to keep up the spirits of his companions by his liveliness, "as there's no use in being either sad or sulky, and we can't venture to sing to raise our hearts, what would you think of another story?"

"I'm no story teller," said Ned, "but you have an illigant one there beside you" (pointing to Martin).

"Well, I'm sorry to hear yourself say that," said Johnny, "for it was only last week that I flatly contradicted Dan Heraghty, when he said that you knew no more than a horse how to tell a story. He said something, too, about your writing being now but an old, shaking hand; that you were a botch at fractions, and didn't know how to pronounce the dative case of *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*. But young fellows will be talking, and I didn't mind much what he said, though there were others by (friends of his, I suppose), that seemed to believe it all."

"A shakin' hand—fractions and dative *hu-io*! The spalpeen that I taught myself the little he knows."

"And I forgot that he said, too, that you could no more build the bridge in Cæsar (I forget what book he mentioned) than you could talk good English."

"Oh, the big *bosthoon*, that has no more brains than a goat; I'd make a bridge of his crooked body, the disciple—I would by—God forgive me for cursin'!" the old man clenched his withered hand and looked, if not martial, at least very pugnaciously inclined.

"Pooh, my old boy, don't vex yourself about him.

He's but a young whelp, and will give tongue; and surely its not the one day ye should be spoken of. I never believe the half of what he says, though (as I said before) he has friends that believe it all."

"The half of what such an ignoramus as him would say."

"Pho', choke the dog, he's not worth wasting any more words about, particularly as, though he has certainly the gift of the gab, he hasn't a line of the poetry in him like you or me, old boy."

"*You*, Johnny—poethry!" exclaimed Ned with considerable asperity, as he had relished neither the matter nor manner of the pedlar's recent allusions to Dan Heraghty.

"Yes, me, old boy; surely I've a knack for poetry."

"Why, Johnny," rejoined Ned, rather contemptuously, "you can rhyme doggerel fair enough in the way of your business, but what do you know about the classics or the Haithen Mythology—about Jupiter or the Sybils, Diana or Hector, Venus or the Styx, or any o' th' other ould gods or goddesses; and how could you make a line o' *rale* poethry without allusions and similyls about them?"

"A fig for goddesses and gods,
A bet I'll make, and give you odds—
This bottle to your *dhudeen* black."

(Johnny drew forth from his bundle a bottle as ample in its girth as that before produced by Fergus, and full to the brim, and, placing it before him, he continued his rhyme)—

"Withour their help, that I've the knack
To spin a verse, and faster, too,
Than you, with all their aid, can do.

The stuff—prime stuff, as I'm a sinner,
 To be divided by the winner
 'Mong all friends here. So now, old Ned,
 Do you agree, or hang your head,
 And own yourself a beaten man,
 As many did, by Jack M'Cann,
 The roving blade that rhymes at pleasure,
 As easy just as cloth he'd measure?"

"Rhymes, indeed! you call them rhymes?" said Ned, with much contempt. "Johnny, you might measure a yard of linen or dimity ready enough, but you don't know the first principle o' versifyin'. Sure you have eight syllables in one line and nine in another, so that it seems you didn't know how even to reckon them on your fingers, not to talk of your knowin' nothing at all about the feet in a line accordin' to the measure."

"Is it that I don't know how to measure, you're saying?"

"Oh, I don't allude to the measure o' wares, but to the measure o' poethry. But there's an ould Latin proverb that ses——"

"No Latin, Ned."

"I wont coat (quote) it, as, of coorse, you couldn't undherstand it, but it means, 'let the cobbler not go beyond his last;' so do you, Johnny, stick to your pack, and lave feet and syllables, and invocations to thim that undherstand the poethry."

"Invocations, and syllables, and feet! oh, murther in Irish!"

"For feet this minute what care I?"

'Tis wings we want when we would fly,
 And mouths we use when we are dry;
 So as we're them inclined to wet,
 Let us your own bould verses get,
 And ev'n tho' gods and spouses help you,
 Upon my soul I think I'll skelp you."

There was a burst of low laughter at this effusion, and Ned looked, if we must tell the truth, a little stupid after Johnny had closed, and as if undecided whether he should accept the challenge or not. Then after a moment's pause, he whispered into Martin Grehan's ear, "did you ever hear my verses about the rosebud of Ballintubber, Martin?"

"Did I hear the winds blowin'? But don't repate thim verses, for all that, befear that dhroll rogue, Johnny, ud say you wor like the piper that had but the wan tune."

"Come, Ned, my ould buck, where's your heathen gods now, and what value are they, if you can't draw on them for a verse or two when there's a demand in the market?"

"Johnny's right," said Martin, "an' now, Ned, let's see what you can do for the honour ov ould Ballintubber."

Ned looked up to the roof of the cavern, then down on its floor, then to the right and left, then simpered and looked foolish, then turned up his eyes again, as if to catch the inspiration, and chaunted forth, with a serious, though ludicrous emphasis,

"Minerva, Wisdom's goddess, shine,
And aid me, too, ye tuneful nine;
Bright Phoebus also, god of day,
Incline thine aid to me, I pray.
Diana chaste, and Juno grand,
It's you I beg my friends to stand.
Ould Homer, blind, sung wars of Throy,
Caused by the amorous Throjan boy;
And Virgil, in his Eneid bould,
Of Dido and Æneas tould;
But if to me ye will incline,
Ye gods and goddesses so fine,

Bright Venus, Jupiter, and Mars,
Bellona, too, that rules o'er wars,
With th' other gods, if ye'll combine,
In junction with the tuneful nine,
To sanction my poor humble verse,
I will an Irish rhyme rehearse,
That shall ould Rome and Greece surpass
As does a racer a lame ass——

"That's a vulgar simile," said Ned, balking in his rhyme.

"Ned's fairly beat when he's obliged to descend as low as his brother for a rhyme," exclaimed Johnny, chuckling, "isn't he, boys and girls?"

"Why he gev up himsel', sure enough," said Martin, tho' some of his rhymes must be very grand, as mysel' couldn't undherstand only an' odd word in them. But, may be if you'd let him thry agin, an' mind his hand——"

"No! no second offers; he's as beat as ever a badger was after a hard day's fighting. I knew all along, with all his stuff about heathen gods, and blind poets, and the muses, that he couldn't do it; and I only wonder he wasn't stuck in the mud before the third line.

"Right well I knew the tuneful rhyming nine
Would not to help out Ned's bad verse incline.
His heathen gods too, left him on his back,
Because they were no match for rhyming Jack.
And for his idle hussy goddesses,
I'd cage them up in iron boddices,
Where every other lazy, crazy slut,
That turns poor silly brains, should still be put;
Instead of wasting every foollish phrase,
To smear them thick with flattery and praise,
Hoping they'd help *him* with a drawling chime
Whom nature never gave the power to rhyme.

"Do you mane—have you the assurance to say, Johnny M'Cann, that I can't versaify?" asked Ned, in high wrath.

"I mean," rejoined the pedlar, winking at his other comrades, "if you had any knack at all, would you be obliged to fall on a lame jack ass for a rhyme? Oh, Ned, Ned, I wouldn't wish for a balloon, poor as I am, that Dan Heraghty was listening to you a while ago, when you were so completely floored."

"Why, Johnny, you're almost as big an ignoramus as that spalpeen himself, to think you could sack me in rhyming, because I stumbled in one line."

"Come, Ned, own yourself well threshed, like a man, or we must put it to the vote. For the matter of that, I don't doubt but I can flog you to-day in Latin as well as in the rhyming."

"You speak Latin!" exclaimed Ned, opening his eyes wide with astonishment, "why, you couldn't talk a syllable o' that grand language, if you were to get all Ireland for it. I'll bet you this ancient silver snuff-box that I got from Sir Edmund—*requiescat in pace*, that is, 'may he rest in pace'—to your scissors and tape (for measuring), that you can't talk a word of even bog-Latin."

"Done, Ned—it's a bet, and mind I'll keep you to it; boys and girls be witnesses. Now, Ned, isn't *whiskey* good Latin for goose?" And he uncorked the ample bottle.

"Ned's lost his bet fairly," was echoed round.

"Well then, as I'm the conqueror, I'll be generous and leave Ned his own stakes. But surely I've right to divide the liquor?"

"Sure enough—sure enough."

Johnny now produced also from his wallet a small tin measure, and the liquor was again passed round, Ned, now completely restored to good humour, taking his share as willingly and as merrily as the rest.

"Never mind Johnny, ather all, Ned *avie*," whispered Martin, "some o' your rhymes was grander than anything he could give."

"No shame for them either," whispered Ned, "seein' they were composed long ago as the openin' ov a grand poem adout Roderic O'Connor and Breeney. But between ourselves, that Johnny is the divle himself at ready rhymin'."

The pedlar had now completely succeeded in his aim, namely to banish despondency for the present, from the minds of the fugitives, and cheer for a while, at least, their spirits. Even the children had enjoyed the keen encounter of words, though they could comprehend, of course, only a portion of them. For Johnny himself, though he was, as we have seen, under provocation, deeply stained with one of the characteristic passions of his countrymen, revenge, he was, in other respects, of that enviable disposition, that neither too much fears the future, nor regrets the past.

He was flinging out an additional jest at Ned's expense, when they were all startled by a rustling noise above them. But the next moment a fox's head showed itself peering through a crevice in the roof of the cave, which had been previously concealed from their view by tangled briars and furze and fern. Reynard, however, on perceiving the unexpected intruders on his domain, withdrew his head rapidly, without further seeking to add to the occupants; and with his tail between his legs,

sneaked quietly off to a near hedge, to await their departure.

"Well, Ned," observed Johnny, "Reynard, sneaking away with his tail between his legs, 'll make a better simile for you again than the lame ass, when you're hard set."

"Joke away, mather Johnny, as you sacked me in the Latin, I give up intirely to you."

"Well, we'll all keep the secret from Dan Heraghty, at all events."

Leave we now the occupants of the cave to pass as they may the next two hours—the last they were ever to spend on Irish ground—to look after other characters of our tale.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

At about half a league's distance from the point of Kilglass, the main road ceased, and a rocky *boreen* succeeded, which, for some distance, was in winter the bed of a torrent.

"Aylmer, I think your fellows had better dismount here," said Sir John, addressing the captain; "yourself and myself, with Rorke and Dixon, can keep the saddle till we meet more obstruction than those stone ditches."

The men dismounted at the word of command, and, each leading his horse, advanced slowly along the *boreen*, according to orders.

"Now, sirrah," exclaimed the baronet to the forced guide, "lead us on briskly, and at your peril, the shortest direction to the point."

"But, your honour," said the frightened peasant, "I tould you afore I don't know those parts well at all."

"We'll soon make you know them, rascal, with a touch of the steel—Aylmer, your glass for a moment; have you perceived anything in the little offing?"

"No, Sir John," replied Aylmer, reaching over the glass. The wind had risen considerably; and the clouds and vapour from the ocean had thickened and extended and now hung, like a dense curtain, between earth and sky, shutting out all objects to seaward, except that they were occasionally swayed to and fro' by the wind, like the waving of drapery, when a momentary glimpse of the sea beyond might be caught for a short reach.

After looking intently for a moment or two, Sir John reached back the glass to the captain, exclaiming eagerly: "Yes, she's there still, and we're all right. I see what I conceive to be her mast above the hilly point. Now, rascal, can we reach Kilglass without doubling round that cursed strand—eh?"

"Myself knows nothin' at all at all, about the say or the strand here, yer honour, if you wor to kill me out an' out, barrin' to take the road afore our eyes round the point."

"The omadhawn is tellin' the truth to yer honour; what ud the like ov him know about the shore?" said a voice from behind a near hedge. The speaker, a tall young man, was standing with his arms resting on a spade with which he had been apparently ditching, and looking over the hedge at the party though he had not been perceived before by Sir John or his comrades, in their eagerness to observe the appearances about the point.

"Ha! then *you*, I presume, knows those inlets well—eh?" said Sir John, dashing up to the point of the hedge over which the speaker's head appeared.

"As well as I know my right hand, yer honour."

"Then your our man—can we reach the point beyond without rounding this strand?"

"The point o' Kilglass, yer honour?"

"The same."

"Why there is a place the strand can be crassed aisyly, though the bottom is only mud everywhere else; but is's not many knows that place, an' it's only in very dhry weather like this it could be crassed at all."

"And can we reach the strand and cross it without quitting our horses, sirrah—eh?"

"Faix, yer honour, by takin' a few bould leps, an' tumblin' an odd wall, ye'll aisy enough get to the sthrand, an' the place I know a whole ridgment o' horse could crass it together. But what am I to get, yer honour, for bringin' ye across an' lavin' my work?"

"Your reward shall be a bullet through the body, or to be shortened of your head by a broad-sword cut, if you waste any more time in asking questions. So out and forward at once."

Shemus Fadha, for he it was, either was, or affected to be terrified for an instant. The next, however, he jumped across the hedge, and calling on his comrade, a younger and alighter man—in fact, no other than our acquaintance Tony Grehan—to sling by his spade and follow him, he pushed boldly forward alongside Sir John and his three companions,

"Now then," said Sir John, "as I see you are a

willing and a fearless rascal, you shall have five guineas if you pilot us smoothly and quickly."

The troopers were directed to lead their horses still and clear away, as rapidly as possible, any obstacle that might intervene between them and the point of the strand towards which Sir John and the captain, with their two companions, should precede them.

"Well I'm sure I saw that 'ere feller wot's with Sir John and the captain afore," said Heavisides, addressing Donald Frazer, and pointing to Shemus—"Aint he like the lad as was shot last Hautumn comin' hout o' the Mass-place?" continued the troop-serjeant-major, after having again closely regarded the person of the guide.

"Weel," rejoined Frazer, whose eye had taken the same direction; "I winna say ye're a' the gither wrang. Certes the lad has an unco likeness to yon chiel, wha met wi the accident in the Mass-place. But, gin it's the same mon, he maun ha' thruv weel since, as yon's a strappin cummer noo."

"Pon my sowl," said Tim Murphy, Frazer's comrade, "I don't doubt at all but yoursel' and Sandy's in the right box, serjeant, though if it's himsel' that's in it an' no other, he must surely have the luck by a thousand to get over his shatthered leg so well. I helped to carry him, an', if it's himsel' a fine patient he was, without a grunt or a groan, *noo mages shin*, (that's no joke), an' maybe he's not grown a strappin' fellow since. I hope he won't give us the slip an' lave us in the lurch—I wondher does Sir John or the captain know he was shot wan Sunday for bein' at Mass."

"My eyes, Tim, speak low. What does Sir Joh

or the captain care wot 'appened him, if he shows 'em the shortest way?"

"Nae mair nor wad I wha mixed the jorum, whether she was papistical, prelatical, or covenanted."

Sir John and Alymer dashed gallantly over the obstructing walls and hedges. Charley, too, by the aid of a gelding, that pushed himself through the stone fences, or clambered, cat-like, over the earthen ones, kept nearly parallel with them, with the trifling mishap of a few insignificant falls. But what between having a wayward animal that shied at every little obstacle, and his own bad horsemanship, which obliged him to search for gaps whenever he met a fence, and even to dismount when he found none, the curate was considerably behind when his companions reached the strand; even the dismounted dragoons were there some minutes before him.

"Now, Aylmer, said Sir John, as the dragoons came up to the beach, "order your fellows to mount."

"The curate is not near us," observed Aylmer.

"No matter. We can't lose time and he can follow us—Aylmer, your glass again for an instant."

The glass was again handed to him; but after applying it to his eye for a moment, the baronet flung it back, exclaiming "there is no use in trying to see anything through those cursed clouds—they are growing as black as ink. But she can't have stirred since we saw her before. Hallo, sirrah (to the guide) lead the way and—hark you, Aylmer, are your fellows' arms in good condition?"

"They have been just examined, Sir John, and are in prime order."

"Then let a bullet be sent through that fellow, or

let him be cloven to the chin, if you perceive the shadow of anything suspicious about his movements—you hear what I say: now on, sirrah."

"My ears are wide awake, yer honour; an' I suppose you wish me to bring you to that smugglin' vessel behind the point."

"Never mind your suppositions, for fear your ears should be shortened, but lead on."

"Why I only mintioned it, yer honour, bekase if that's what you wanted, after crassin' the sthrand, I could take ye a shorter cut than goin' round by the shore; an' sure enough, it's glad we'd be hereabouts, if yer honour was goin' to banish the impident vagabones, that there's no livin' with since they kem to the point, with their dhrinkin' an' impidence, an' haulin' about poor peoples' wives an' sweethearts."

"No more words, but push on."

Shemus now, advancing some yards seaward, strode boldly out on the strand, after having first flung a rapid but searching glance at the position of those who were to follow him. He was closely succeeded by Sir John and the captain. The girth of Rorke's horse had been burst in his previous unwonted exertions, and Tony was busily assisting him in arranging it, while the re-mounted dragoons followed their leaders, three abreast.

Heavisides was puffing in the rear when Tony, after whispering a few words with the gauger, across his horse's neck, which had an effect the reverse of accelerating his arrangements, thrust a large bunch of furze, which he had picked up for the purpose, under the tail of the chesnut. Heated by the previous exercise, and goaded by the punctures of the furze, the animal lashed and plunged furiously, so

that the troop-serjeant-major, unprepared for the violent motion, though a good horseman, was speedily pitched from the saddle, amid the jeers of the rear file of his comrades, who perceived his disaster. Fortunately, however, his fall was on the soft heath and, recovering himself speedily, he was preparing to put foot in stirrup once more when, Tony again applying the furze, the horse took flight, galloping along the sward by the edge of the strand, as Tony stood between him and the other horses, which he would otherwise, of course, have instinctively followed.

For an instant Heavisides stood, as if undecided whether he would not cut down the audacious strippling; his pistols were borne away in the holster. But Tony did not look like one who would be fool enough to wait quietly for a sword-cut; and to do the serjeant justice, his native goodness of heart and manliness would not permit him to cut at an unarmed and defenceless boy.

"Folly yer horse, serjeant," said Tony, "and don't be in a hurry ketchin' him aither. That's the best gallop for you he took this month; an' he was med take it for the sake o' Bessy Andhrews an' Harry Gorman, God rest his soul."

Heavisides started on hearing the names, and was about to question the speaker further; but Tony was already on his way towards the curate, who was just approaching the strand, somewhat nearer its termination than where they had been standing; and the serjeant-major went in pursuit of his horse, which had been stopped by a small stream into which the tide was flowing, and on the edge of which he now stood snatching a scanty mouthful of the thin herb bordering it.

"Yer reverence is jist in time," said Tony, as the curate came up to him, "I was waitin' for you; an' we can crass here, without going as high as the throopers."

"But is it as safe?"

"Safer in very dhry weather like this, bekase it's harder; and yer reverence might see the tide is up to the horses' hoofs inreddy, an' what ud it be, when we'd be as far as them?"

Dixon, though he could not see the water, in consequence of the dense mist curtain, was aware that the tide must be driving in more rapidly than usual as the gale was from the South West, and he could hear the turbulent and unceasing dash of the waters, mingling with the screams of the sea fowl."

"Then lead on," he said, as he followed his treacherous guide on the strand.

The strand, when Sir John and the party first entered on it, was perfectly hard; but, before the baronet and the front men had reached the middle, the horses were sinking at each step half way to the knee, and the tide beginning to sweep by them in longer reaching waves.

"How is this, ruffian—I thought you said 'twas all hard?" exclaimed Sir John to the guide, who was still in advance.

"So it is, yer honour, after you wanst pass the little sthrame in the cinther."—pointing to the narrow mid-channel, in which there was always water—"an' the faster yer honour gets over that now the better."

Shemus sprang forward himself: the spurs were dug into the horse's sides, and by powerful exertions, the animals in front plunged on to the edge of the

current where, however, they were sunk almost to the fetlocks. The wind, too, was continuing to rise, and the waters reached the horses' breasts.

"Shoot the treacherous ruffian—cut him down," roared the baronet.

"Thin its time for me to take lave o' yer honour," said Shemus; and, with the words, he dived into the channel, with his head to the sea.

"A hundred guineas to the man that shoots him, or takes him alive," shouted the baronet.

A dozen shots passed behind, before and around the diver, but without harming him; and one of the troopers more eager than prudent, leaped from his horse and, with cloak, sword and boots, plunged into the channel. But, after swimming a few yards, he was fain to flounder back to his horse.

The water was now rising fast; and, after the leaders had given vent to their rage in some hearty curses on the treacherous guide, the word was given to turn the horses' heads, and, by great exertions, and with no little difficulty, the party regained the beach they had left, some of the men having been forced to dismount to lighten and assist the struggling animals.

Charley Rorke was sitting quietly on horseback at the edge of the strand; and Heavisides, after having regained the saddle, had advanced but a few yards when he met his baffled comrades returning. He escaped reprimand, however, as Sir John and Captain Aylmer were the last to return, having paused more than once, to try to catch the reappearance of Shemus.

But where was the curate? With him it fared the worst of all; for Tony led him to a spot where,

though remoter from the sea, he knew the channel was softer and deeper, for a few yards, than where the dragoons had attempted to cross.

When Dixon first began to find his horse sinking and the water rising, he checked the gelding and, upbraiding his guide, said he would return at once. Tony, however, assured him that, after a few yards more, he would find the bottom as hard as the road; and he struggled on till he reached the edge of the channel.

"Now give a bould plunge, yer reverence, an' you're over id all," said Tony.

The curate applied the spurs, but the animal shying at the water and dragging it's limbs from the slime, plunged sideways, sinking deeper than before.

"Villain, I'll have you transported for this treachery," exclaimed the curate, in a tone shriller than that of the winds or sea birds, when he found himself in this predicament.

Tony looked to the horsemen and, perceiving they had more than enough on their hands, for a few minutes, in extricating themselves, exclaimed, as he suddenly cut the girths. "Whew! yer reverence wouldn't be so wicked intirely to a poor boy for the value ov a little duckin', that'll only timper yer bither blood."

The curate, utterly enraged, made a cut at the deceitful taunter with the whip he carried. But Tony, receiving the blow on his arm, and wrenching the whip from the slight hand that had attempted to strike, with one hand jerked the reins, and, with the other, struck the horse heavily on the flank. The effect was that the animal, impelled by the blow,

made a plunge that brought it again to the water's edge while, the saddle swerving, Dixon was flung into the water. Another well-applied blow, active and practised hands to the reins, and the animal was constrained to clear the channel, after which his path was truly on a firm bottom till he made, with his agile leader, the opposite beach. What became of him after, though strenuous exertions were made for his recovery, we have not been able to ascertain whether he became mixed up with the mountain ponies, or whether he was draughted to the Continent, as, though inactive, perhaps, from sufference, his frame was apparently full of strength and endurance.

With much difficulty, and after having sent forth more than one cry for assistance, Dixon extricated himself from the waves and slime, and managed to reach his companions, who, amid all the annoyance they felt for their own mishap, could not forbear laughing at his bedraggled appearance and woe-begone countenance, as he uttered lamentations for his horse.

Heavisides now rode down to the point of the beach whence the curate had entered on the strand, and fired both his pistols at Tony, who was, however, beyond their range, and fleeing with the swiftness of some animal of chase, driving the horse before him at full speed. The gauger, too, for appearance sake, discharged his blunderbuss in the same direction, but with such a level, that there was little danger that any of its contents would reach the runaway.

Sir John was directing the dragoons, who had remounted in their drenched habiliments, to ride round the point at full gallop, when the voice of

Shemus Fadha was heard distinctly above the dashing of the waves and the shrieking of the sea-birds from the opposite side of the inlet, though his person could not be distinguished through the mist. "You're done every way, Sir John," he shouted, "the vessel's sailed this three hours, an' ye may go home an' dhry yersels at yer leisure. Where is Shawn now?"

The baronet was pausing, half incredulous and half fearing that the words might be true, when a boat reached the beach a few yards to seaward of the party. It contained two peasants, who had been drawn from their cabins at the mouth of the inlet, by the shouts and other noises, and who, on being questioned, confirmed the statement, that the vessel had sailed from the point of Kilglass some hours previously; and there was the impress of truth in their information.

"Aylmer, give those men in charge to some of your fellows," said Sir John, "and let your best horseman ride at his fastest speed to the point. He shall have five guineas, and full indemnity should he damage the horse, if he overtakes us before we reach the town. Should he find that those rascals have deceived us, they shall swing, by the bones of Black Dick, from the first tree we shall reach. If they have given true intelligence, they shall be set free with a largess, and a messenger must be despatched, at life and death speed, to Galway, with orders that a vessel shall forthwith sail in pursuit of 'The Swallow.' I'll have the smuggling dogs still, if it cost me a thousand pounds."

"Heavisides is your man for speed, Sir John," said the gauger, who sometimes could not repress his jests, however ill-timed; "or maybe Mr. Dixon

would like a ride; it would help to circulate his blood after the dip."

"This is no time, nor am I in a mood for ribald jests, sir," said the baronet sternly; "*you* have managed to keep your skin dry, at all events."

"Yes, Sir John: good people are scarce; and a sweet-voiced bird whispered me not to go on the strand."

Had the baronet known to what bird Charley alluded, his jest might have been made a serious one.

The horseman instantly set off for the point, at a pace that promised a speedy return; and it being arranged on their reaching the road the curate was to be accommodated with the saddle-seat on one of the horses, while its owner was to ride behind him, the party began to retrace their way, chilled and dispirited. They had not made a league from the shore when they were overtaken by their comrade from the point, with intelligence confirming the account given by the men. There was no vessel visible from the point, he said; and he had learned from more than one that "*The Swallow*" had sailed some hours previously.

The peasants were now, accordingly, set at liberty, with the gratuity of a guinea to each, and the party continued their route at the fastest pace the jaded horses could exert.

The wind was still high: the sun had gone down beyond the dark masses of cloud, and a gloomy twilight was succeeding, when the clattering of the horses, sweeping by on their return, again saluted the ears of the cave occupants; and after the delay of a few minutes further, they set out fearlessly for the point.

They had not proceeded far when they came up with the released boatmen, who were more communicative to them than they had been to Sir John, informing them that "The Swallow" lay in the shelter of a precipitous island, not half a league from Kilglass.

On reaching the strand, too—which had been so disastrous to the curate and the party—the boatmen speedily obtained another boat, in which, together with their own, the emigrants were stowed.

"Murder," exclaimed Ned, when he found himself seated in the boat, "this is a quare time o' life for my ould bones to be goin' on the say, that never felt a smell o' the salt water afore; an', maybe, to meet with storm an' shipwrack, as the pious Eneas did. As the poet has it, '*Mare sub*——'"

"No Latin and no grumbling, Ned," exclaimed the pedlar; "take the world like me,"

Come heat, come cold, come sun, come snow,
Let it be calm, or breezes blow;
Be waters smooth, or let them bluster,
Jack M'Cann they ne'er can fluster;
For he's the boy prepared to meet
The rough or smooth, the sour or sweet."

There had been but a few strokes of the oar given, when Fergus came rushing to the beach, followed at a short interval by Tony—for neither had moved far from the strand. They were, of course, speedily taken in, and the party, after some tugging against wind and tide, reached the vessel, where they were welcomely received.

On board Ned found, to his gratification, besides his old pupil Frank, his "blooming rosebud," and the prior inspirer of his muse, Ellen Lynch. The latter he saluted in a Latin quotation; the former

with one from himself and a disparaging allusion to Dan Heraghty. Arthur Ffolliot was on board, too; for, having reached the vessel, despite Frank's advice and Ellen's entreaties, he refused point blank to return any more either to his quarters or to Ffolliot's Grove; instead of which he penned a note to his colonel containing his resignation, and forwarded it to his servant, Denis Grehan, ordering that official to enclose in it forthwith the commission, which Heaviesides would find for him in the private drawer of his dressing-glass.

The evil reputation of his father and uncle in the country had, he stated, rendered him uncomfortable for some time past; to add to which he was constrained to witness and hear of proceedings of his father's, from which his soul recoiled; and he had a repugnance to make use of the (he feared) ill-gotten wealth at Ffolliot's Grove. His affectionate mother—whose memory was still dear to the surrounding district—had, however, saved and left him two thousand pounds; and with the assistance of this he would, he said, carve out his fortune in another country, where he would be removed from witnessing the scowls of hatred and hearing the well-earned curses of misery.

Frank flung an arch glance at his cousin, when he found that Arthur did not enumerate her departure for the Continent among his reasons for quitting his native country.

"Well Ned, my friend," said Arthur, "I think we can found a colony ourselves now, like your old acquaintance, the pious Æneas."

"Faix and so we could, Masther Arthur, and, barrin the shipwrack and the storm, settle it purty

enough too, by making yourself the goddess' son, and Miss Ellen, queen Lavinia."

Arthur laughed and Ellen looked confused. The wind had shifted a little: the canvass was again unfurled to it, and the gallant little vessel was preparing to start once more, like a racer, on her course, when a boat approached with lusty strokes. In it was Father Davy, who had learned, that morning, that the vessel was to sail in the course of the day, but had been detained so late by the distance of his place of asylum from the point, and the delay occasioned by the visit of Sir John and the dragoons to the beach. On reaching the vessel, the friar was helped on board, while the rowers pulled back speedily for the shore, and seemed to be greatly affected as he leant over the side of the vessel, with his eyes fastened on the land. At that moment a lightning flash of intense brightness darted from the womb of the black clouds, revealing distinctly the objects on the darkening shore; and raising his eyes and hands towards heaven, he said in a tone of deep and solemn emotion, while the tears streamed freely, "my country—my beautiful but unfortunate country, though I never see you again, my blessing and the blessing of God be with you for ever and ever. Oh, may that bright flash be an omen of bright and happy days to come for you yet. Again, Heaven's blessing and mine be on you and your sons for evermore, amen."

He stretched forth his hands and sank on the deck: the winds swelled the sails, and piped their wild song amid the sails and cordage: the vessel was on her course.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ABOUT six months after "The Swallow" had sailed with her freight of compelled or voluntary exiles, Sir Robert was approaching Ffolliot's Grove, to visit its owner. During that interval, the debauched and infatuated conformist, had even increased the riotous extravagance of his living. He was pillaged by his servants, made a tool of by his acquaintance, and gulled on the turf and at the gaming table. In short, from his improvident and reckless habits, his licentiousness and constant state of inebriety, he was a kind of fountain—an impure one, to be sure—from which for every one to draw, according to his circumstances and capability. Nor was there living one who took sufficient interest in him, to be at the trouble of endeavouring to slacken or restrain his career of crime and folly.

He was proceeding along the avenue, when he was hailed, from the adjoining hedge by the girl before named as Ally Higgins, and who was indeed, as Bryan Gaven had expressed it, a bouncing, showy girl, with a fine person, good features, and rich complexion.

Ally, unfortunately for herself, had been reared by a widowed aunt who, as she neared the bottom of life's hill, became too much attached to whiskey and tobacco. Education was a crime against the vile laws at that dark period; and the household duties in her aunt's cabin, though she was, now and then,

constrained to do some out-of-door work, were too small to occupy the girl's time, so that the seeds of vanity and self-will, largely sown in her disposition, had ample time and opportunity to extend, and overtop whatever good ones might be scattered there. She was deprived also, by those same vile laws, of the blessed restraints imposed by attention to her religious duties, which has always been so salutary a check to vice, among those in her rank particularly, who are unrestrained by the fear of losing caste and other adventitious checks, that *might* curb those in a higher sphere.

Instead of the prohibited place of worship, as she grew up, she became a regular attendant at fairs, markets, and wakes, and soon learned to despise the warnings and advice of her aged relative, whose example tallied so little with her precepts, and whose own failings, unhappily, came so often under observation. As she advanced to womanhood, too, she ascertained, of course, the fact that she was good-looking, and contracted, as a natural consequence, that relish for dress and decoration so generally ruinous to young females of her class. In short she was a prey peculiarly marked out for the spoiler; and readily she bartered her innocence and reputation for the elder Ffoliot's gold.

Immediately after Arthur's departure, she had been installed into the command of Ffoliot's Grove and the household, as she had been, for some time previously, of its owner.

"I have been driven to this," said Ffoliot, to his friend Baker, one day in the mansion, after she had assumed the reins of government there, "by the irreverent conduct of that infatuated boy, who has

shown regard, in his folly, neither to himself nor to me, the most anxious of fathers. Yet, for all his undutifulness, would I not give her the title of his mother."

"The world must understand and appreciate your forbearance; at least, the moral and reflecting portion of it, which is, of course, all you care for," said the attorney, drily. "But take care, Bill," he added, with emphasis: "women, when they once get authority, are as hard to be shaken out of it as a veteran bailiff out of his caption. Besides, you know well they are sometimes more uncertain than the verdict of a jury, when it's not all of the right sort, particularly good-looking and ignorant girls of the lower class, and when they are visited by lavish young fellows, like Sir Robert and Cornet Beaumont, and have to deal with an old man—excuse me, Bill, but you are getting fast into 'the sere and yellow leaf.'"

Sir Robert, having approached the hedge, began to fling out some coarse and licentious jests, in allusion to her position, which she—fallen creature that she was—rather provoked than repelled; and he was in the act of handing her down from the hedge, that they might walk together, when Ffoliot appeared at the opposite hedge. When the latter saw who was with Ally, the attorney's words flashed strongly on his mind; and, after eyeing the conformist malignantly for a moment, he said, addressing Ally, in a tone of wrath, "how dare you, baggage, be seen by any visitor at the Grove? Into your housewifery at once."

"How dare I, is it, Misther Ffoliot?" she rejoined indignantly. "I suppose you'll be lockin' us up wan 'those days."

"If you are not instantly, in I shall leave you locked up for a month."

"I dare you, you purse-prond naiger," said the girl, who was naturally of a violent temper, knew well the character of him she had to deal with, and was enraged by the contemptuous manner in which she was treated before Sir Robert—"I dare you—I dare you," she repeated with vehemence.

"Poo, Mr. Ffolliot," interrupted Sir Robert, "you should not be so hard on poor Ally for speaking to me, as she and I are old acquaintances."

"Ay, an' will be agin whin the 'ould skinflint is dead an' rotten—lock me up! I defy him to lay a wet finger on me;" and the girl stamped passionately.

"I shall cool you on bread and water, as well as by confinement, for this insolence, you low-lived baggage," said Ffolliot, turning pale with rage.

"Low-lived baggage," screamed the girl, the violence of her temper excited to an ungovernable pitch, her eyes flashing fiercely, and her handsome features distorted with excess of passion—"low lived baggage! Maybe I haven't as good blood in my veins as your old grandmother Pegsh Larkin, or your grandfather *Lisem*; an' if I was as mane as the dirt, who'd have anything to do with you, barrin' some outcast (as low as yoursel', an' who'd care you wor hanged to-morrow barrin for yer money? An' if you wor itsel', you wouldn't be the first o' the family that spiled a market—low-lived baggage! Did you ever hear of wan Jim Larkin? eh, Bill Ffolliot, did you?" She concluded, screaming more shrilly and advancing closer to him, while her hands closed and opened alternately, with an apparent inclination to be fastened in his face.

Ffolliot's countenance alternated from its pale hue almost to blackness, at this last allusion to a maternal granduncle, who had been doomed to an exalted end for having exhibited, on many occasions, an over-strong partiality for taking charge of other men's cattle, without consulting their owners. But before he could speak Sir Robert interfered, keeping down by some exertion, his bursting laughter.

"Ally," he said, "you must not be so violent; you must forgive Ffolliot and be friends with him again, as you were always good natured, I know."

"Friends with him that called me a low-lived baggage!" she resumed with almost as much vehemence as before; "an' he'll lock me up, an' he'll keep me on bread an' wather. Friends with him! Never while my head is hot. But I tell him to his teeth that I'll ait an' dhrink the best in Ffolliot's Grove, while I'm in it, an' appear too, whin any one comes there that I like. No," she continued, after a moment's pause, "I'll never ait a bit o' the ould naiger's bread again, as long as I'm alive, nor stay another hour undher his roof."

Under the impulse of this conception, she sprang forward towards the house, doubtless with the intention, at the moment, of putting it into execution.

"To your visit I owe this pleasant scene, which you, no doubt, enjoy so much, Sir Robert," said Ffolliot, after she had disappeared.

"Not at all, Ffolliot. You owe it to your own nonsensical jealousy and violence. Why, until now, I always thought you too good natured a fellow to shut up so fine a flower as Ally in Ffolliot's Grove to regale no eye but your own."

"Sir Robert, if your visit is on business, the

sooner we despatch it the better ; if it is not, we need waste no more words," retorted Ffolliot, with angry bitterness, for he had completely lost, for the time, all his usual prudential control and regard to consequences.

" Why, Ffolliot, are you mad to-day, or do you forget to whom you speak ?" rejoined the conformist, in an equally angry tone. " Can yourself and your trull not have a scolding tilt, without your impertinent humours being extended to your superiors ?"

A violent altercation now ensued between the well matched pair, in the course of which no measured terms of reviling and reproach were used on either side. Low-lived, swindling extortioner, and drunken, unprincipled debauchee, were among the complimentary expressions frequently bandied from one to the other ; and they parted with mutual threats of revenge—and speedy revenge vowed and intended.

Ffolliot returned to his house, where Ally Higgins was busily employed in packing up her wardrobe. The time spent in this occupation had, however, given her leisure to become somewhat cooler and calmer ; and, as she looked round at the rich furniture and dresses so completely at her disposal, she began to half-repent that she had allowed the violence of her temper so completely to overmaster all prudence. Still, however, she calculated that, by spinning out the time in her arrangements, before she would have all ready for her departure, the species of infatuation with which he seemed to regard her, would induce him to make overtures for a reconciliation, notwithstanding all her ill language to him. And she calculated truly ; for having

stolen on tiptoe twice or thrice, to the door of her apartment, and taken a peep through keyhole and crevice at her occupation, he made the expected overture; and, after some time spent in explanations and feigned objections on Ally's part, the reconciliation was effected at the expense, to Ffolliot, of a new dress and some trinkets that had belonged to his wife.

Sir Robert had set out for Ffolliot's Grove, with far other intentions than that of quarrelling with its proprietor. In fact, his expenses had become so extravagantly lavish that, though the possessor of between two and three thousand a-year, like the man in the fable, whose hen laid a golden egg daily, he became impatient of waiting for the regular laying of the eggs in the shape of rents—which, truth to say, were not very punctually handed over to him—and came to the determination of having all the gold at once, by selling the property, or at least a large portion of it. Indeed, within the space of two years, during which the property was in his hands, besides having expended as much of the rental as was delivered to him, he had contrived to borrow from Ffolliot six thousand pounds, and from Baker three, on various mortgages; so that, as those worthies began to refuse advancing any more, with his habits, a sale of at least a portion of the property became almost unavoidable; and it was to arrange with Ffolliot on this subject he had left the Hall that morning. The scene before described, and the consequent altercation had, however, completely reversed his intention.

"No, by——" he exclaimed to himself, as he turned his back to Ffolliot's Grove, after the alter-

cation, "the insolent Jew of an upstart shall never own an acre of it. I will go forthwith to Baker and give him the preference. Ay, he shall have it a thousand pounds under—as bad as he is, he has some pretensions to be a gentleman. If he went do it, I must have the sale advertised, though I would rather avoid that. Any way, the low extortioner shall never write himself owner of a sod of it."

The conformist found Baker, as usual, spectacled and deeply immersed in papers, parchments, and statutes. When Sir Robert detailed to him the recent scene at Ffolliot's Grove, and his own object in going there, the attorney said, in reference to the first subject, seeming to be in no hurry to approach the latter topic, "I should have hardly expected that Bill would allow himself to be hurried so far by passion, as to use such words to *you*, Sir Robert; at the same time that I must say, that you, dashing young fellows, should refrain from approaching the preserves of an infatuated, love-sick *boy* like my friend Ffolliot."

"Well, at all events, he has shown the cloven foot, and debarred himself from ever being the possessor of an acre of the Lynch estate. What do you say to the purchase, Baker? I am come to give you the preference, even at a loss."

The attorney shrugged his shoulders, and observed it was not easy to come at money those days.

"Come, come, Baker, I know you can get the money, and you'd better not lose an opportunity such as you'll never be likely to meet with again. Here is a sketch of the portion of the estate I purpose to dispose of, by that clever draughtsman Walker, with a list of the denominations, their contents, and

present rents ; and you see by the sketch that, even at the rate it is now let at, it yields a rental of twelve hundred a-year. The other portion I shall retain always, as it pays most certainly."

"That is, in other words, Sir Robert," said the attorney, with a grin, "you would give us—I mean the purchaser—the skim milk, and reserve the cream for yourself."

"No, Baker, it wont apply; the rent is ill paid only to me. You would soon enlarge it and make it regular too, so let us have no more beating about the bush. I have dropped you this visit before I would write to Attorney Grindall, in Dublin, as, if the matter suits, I will close the arrangement myself, without any professional interference, except to perfect the necessary documents. I am no extortionate higgler, and only wish to close on off-handed terms. Ay, I would forfeit a round sum in your favour, if it was only to annoy that swindling dog Ffolliot, that I know abominates you as I do a stumbling horse, bad cards, or weak brandy."

"Well, Sir Robert, as you are so pressing, I must think of the matter; will you allow me till to-morrow, when I can ride to the Hall and state definitely what I can do?"

"To-morrow, let me see—no my shooting match with Beaumont for a hundred comes off on to-morrow; but the day after, if you'll drop in and dine at the Hall we can arrange, and I can defer writing to Grindall till after."

The conformist now departed to practise for his shooting match the ensuing day; and, immediately after his disappearance, Baker took some papers from a drawer, and glancing eagerly over them, though

he had read them repeatedly before, exclaimed : " Yes, blast them, they are quite correct. Sir Gerald Lynch must have been a man of business and a sharp fellow, as it is too clear he was one of the few Con-naught gentry that had his grant regularly *enrolled*. He had also the tact (curse his shrewdness), it is equally clear, to get the grant made *general*, and not restricted to heirs male, so that, failing issue to the baronet, his sister, by conforming, could claim the estate. However, she is at present completely *hors de combat*, and likely to remain so ; and I am convinced that neither Sir John nor Ffolliot is aware of the enrolment of the grant, or its precise form. The whole question is certainly beset with some doubt—a lottery ; but the prize would be a rich one, if I could retain those denominations on the terms I could make with the debauched conformist, and ultimately edge myself in for the rest of the property—as there can be no doubt but the besotted owner will be compelled to dispose of it also, and that at no distant date."

He paused a moment in deep rumination—ran over the papers again—fastened a greedy eye on the sketch, and resumed his soliloquy : " It is worth the risk, and I will venture it. Once in possession, it will not be just so easy to unhinge a man of intelligence and loyalty like me ; and if I can get the sot to be content with the advance of a small portion of the purchase-money (in addition to the three thousand he owes me) for a year or half a-year, God knows what might be brought about before then. Yes, 'tis a good thought, a homely proverb that says, ' nothing venture, nothing have.' I will try it."

Accordingly he rode to the hall, the day after the

ensuing one ; and its proprietor and himself entered on the business at once.

"Well, what have you been advised to lay the purchase at?" asked Baker, "and remember Sir Robert, that some of the portion you propose to dispose of is unproductive, and more ill-tenanted."

"No hedging, Baker, you know as well as I do that the greater part of the lands designated in the sketch I gave you, is among the primest in the county, and that the proportion of mountain and bog is unusually small. So let us come to the point at once. I have neither got nor asked any advice as to the amount of the purchase-money. I have settled all that for myself. There is a rental of twelve hundred a-year—granting that some of it is ill-paid now ; and, as I want to drive no Jew's bargain, but to get money, I have fixed upon a sum that no one that knows the value of land could cavil at, namely, sixteen thousand pounds, one thousand of which I shall take off, as I vowed to myself you should have it, by that sum, cheaper than the old swindler Ffoliot ; so that fifteen thousand will be to you the purchase-money, out of which you may deduct the three thousand I owe you as payment, as your mortgages are on those lands, while Ffoliot's, you are aware, are on those I am retaining to myself."

Of this sum the attorney found it impossible to induce the infatuated seller to abate a single pound, though he renewed his attacks for that purpose both before and after dinner ; and he feared to dwell on the nature of the grant, as he could not depend on Sir Robert's principles, that he might not use it as a weapon against himself hereafter. But he did induce him to take three thousand pounds for the pre-

sent, with ample security for the payment of five thousand further in six months, and the remaining four thousand in three months after.

It was then arranged that, though the title-deeds were to be handed over to Baker on the payment of the first three thousand, he was not to take actual possession of the lands for half-a-year, as the attorney was not more anxious to get "a long day" for the payment of the purchase-money, than was Sir Robert for the adjustment of his own debts; and he knew well that other creditors, as well as Ffoliot, would instantly pounce on him, if any portion of the property was once beheld in the possession of Baker.

When the necessary deeds were perfected, the three thousand paid down, and security for the remainder given, and the attorney found himself master of the title-deeds of "all that and those that part of the lands," &c.

"What a rage Ffoliot will be in," he ejaculated to himself, "when he finds himself out-manœuvred. Sir John, though he may be somewhat annoyed, will think less about it, but the interloping money-lender will proceed at once to extremities, unless the conformist idiot keeps his own secret for a few months, until he may be better prepared."

And he was right, for had Ffoliot the slightest inkling of the negotiation between Sir Robert and himself, he would have instantly commenced law proceedings on the mortgages. But he had no suspicion of such negotiation. So far from it indeed that, when his passion had cooled down after the altercation, and calculating prudence resumed her sway, he made the most abject apologies for his unwonted and intemperate warmth. Nay, to such a

length did he proceed with his concession, that he voluntarily offered the conformist an additional thousand as a loan, which was, of course, readily accepted.

Both manœuvres were, however, fated to come speedily to an understanding, by the untimely fate of their intended victim—a fate which the generality of the district attributed to a judgment from heaven for his manifold and striking offences, and which few—very few indeed—regretted.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EARLY in the spring, after his sister and cousin, with their companions, had departed from their native land, and scarcely three months after he had made the sale to Baker, Sir Robert was pursuing the fox, mounted on a noble but fiery and intractable hunter. The day was wet, and, before mounting, he had swallowed a considerable quantity of brandy, so that between the excitement of the liquor and the exercise, before the chase had proceeded far, seconded by his fierce and powerful steed, he rode more like the wild hunter of German superstition than a man of mortal mould.

Walls, and hedges, and trenches were swept across as if with a bird's flight; but the ground was a perfect swamp, and powerful as was the action, and immense the endurance of the animal, his powers were overtaken. Towards the close of the chase, which had been a most exciting one, a high and heavy

gate intervened between the hounds, which had just brought the victim to a stand, and Sir Robert, with the few other sportsmen that had kept near him. The latter immediately proceeded to search for some facile spot for their wearied horses to pass the wall; but he dashed his own, without an instant's pause, at the gate itself. The tired animal, for the first time during the day, balked, as if for a warning; but a shout of derision rung, or seemed to ring in the doomed rider's ears, and, digging deep the spurs, which had been unrequired all through the chase, the unfortunate animal bounded aloft, but its exhausted strength, and the softness of the ground it rose from, rendered it unable to clear the gate, and, with the fearful scream uttered by a horse in mortal agony, it was impaled on the gate, whilst its rider was flung on his head against a large and jagged rock at some yards' distance. He was dead in an instant, without having had time to pray, in word or thought, to his so often and so grievously offended Creator.

His wake and interment were striking illustrations of the times and the character of the conformist himself. Descended from a long line of ancestry, and but a few hours before the proprietor of thousands of rich acres, with his residence abounding in all necessaries, it was scarcely with common decency the rites of "laying out" the corpse were performed. Mourner there was none among the debauched household. On the contrary, immediately after the body had been borne into the hall, a scene of pillage, and drunkenness, and uproar commenced, in striking and fearful contrast with the presence of the silent dead. Money, trinkets, apparel—every article that could be compressed into a small compass, was grasped at and

battled for. The cellar was, of course, entered, and wine and brandy flowed about like streams after summer rains.

Bryan Gaven and Rose Scanlan (once before alluded to in those pages) both in a state of half intoxication, were in the act of scuffling for a ring, which the deceased (the damsel insisted) had promised to give her, when Mr. Gordon—for the first time since he had come to prevent the duel—entered those walls, contaminated for many months by every species of vice and folly. He was accompanied by his curate and Aaron Andrews, whom he had called upon for that purpose; and, with them, he proceeded to affix seals to the doors and presses, to prevent further spoliation, as well as to give orders respecting the funeral. "This scene Mr. Dixon," said the rector solemnly, "affords melancholy and striking proof how little accession of real strength there is to us in conversion, unless it arise from conviction, and through unworldly motives."

"Ay, but the disrespect paid to the remains of a godless sinner, reared too, in the lap of idolatry, cannot surely, sir, be adduced as a reason for the toleration of that creed, from which, doubtless, sprung all his vices and crimes; and from the professors of which, I have reason to know, can be expected nothing but deceit and treachery;" the curate added with bitter emphasis, as the drenching and the loss of his horse, at the beach near Kilglass, rose to his mind.

"What bears most on my mind yer reverence, in regard till the termination o' the God forsaken mon's race," observed Aaron, "is how it testifies till the scriptural denunciations against undutiful children.

He was the undutiful child, and met his judgment in this world; but may God look till the deserted and disobeyed parent."

"Aaron, my friend," said the rector as his eyes filled, the lot of our humanity is such, that there are trials for all parents, and some have been visited even more heavily than you."

"I stand reprov'd, sir," said Aaron, grasping the rector's fingers in his own toil-hardened but honest ones.

There was no attendance at the wake beyond the drunken household, with the exception of a few aged peasants, male and female, who were induced to resort to it for the sake of the cheer, which they rightly judged, would be liberally doled out. But, early the ensuing day Sir John, Elliot, and Baker met together in the hall, each intent on his own interest. The baronet took on himself the responsibility of opening doors and ransacking presses and drawers.

"There is no will nor memorandum of any intended bequest or legacy," he said when the search was closed, and the few papers found minutely examined; "and, as the sister of the deceased is a papist, and not in the country besides, it became my duty to take possession of the property and chattels for the crown, to which, under the circumstances, the entire, of course, reverts."

"I believe, Sir John, I will save you the trouble of looking after one moiety of the estate, at all events," said Baker, with difficulty suppressing a grin, as he drew forth a copy of the deed of sale, the title deeds, a receipt for the monies handed over as part-payment of the purchase money, and a copy of

the securities entered into for the payment of the remainder.

"It must be all a fabrication," exclaimed Ffolliot violently, "or else you (to Baker) got him to sign it in his drunkenness. He never had an idea of disposing of any part of the estate to you. I hold mortgages on it for six thousand pounds; and it was to me he intended to make the sale, whenever he should make it, as you yourself, Baker, must admit, if you speak the truth."

"I can attest that such was *your* intention at all events; and I would advise you as a friend, Mr. Ffolliot, to be a little more guarded in your language, and to recollect that you are not now in contact with the respectable female society of Ffolliot's Grove. Sir John will see at once whether the papers be genuine or not"—the attorney reached over one of the papers, with imperfectly suppressed triumph, to the baronet.

"The papers are, I dare say, all correct," said Sir John, glancing carelessly over them; "but they can have no effect in altering the course I mentioned as my duty." Baker stared at him; and the baronet smiling one of his grimmest smiles, continued, "you had informed yourself, of course, Mr. Baker, when making this purchase, that Sir Gerald Lynch obtained a *general* grant of his property, that it might descend to females, failing male heirs, and that he was one of the very few Connaught gentry that had the prudent foresight to have it *enrolled* regularly by the proper officer."

Not, had an earthquake shaken the ground beneath him, could the attorney have looked more frightenedly bewildered than he did now, when he

found that Sir John was completely versant with the nature of the grant.

"But surely, Sir John," said Ffolliot, "*I* will be paid at once the six thousand, for which I hold the mortgages."

"I will be plain and brief with you both, gentlemen," said Sir John, looking from one to the other, "particularly as I am limited in point of time, and tell you at once, that I am confident that the crown will be very reluctant to sanction repayment of monies lent at usurious interest, or a sale of so questionable a nature, where its own interests are at stake, and where a legitimate claimant may appear any day, should that giddy girl take it into her head to conform."

And no further admission or encouragement could either attorney or magistrate obtain from the baronet, thought the conference lasted for some minutes after, during which they argued, complained, and entreated.

Mingled with the annoyance felt by the over-reached plotters, as they rode together from the hall, was one thought, that gave each some consolation, namely, that his companion was unsuccessful as well as himself. This was, however, not suffered to appear in words, as they had now ascertained that their interests were not clashing.

"Well," said Ffolliot, "Sir John would be an over-match for old Nick himself; and I would bet the interest of my money that he'll manage to get the property into his own clutches, instead of letting it go to the crown. But are we certain of being refunded even the advanced money quietly?"

"Why, considering whose grasp is now on the

estate, I wish we had even that without trouble or delay. However, I think we shall succeed so far at least, by rather going with the current of Sir John's own schemes, than attempting to thwart them."

The funeral procession was almost as thin as the wake had been, being limited to the same persons that had attended the former, with the addition of Sir John, Mr. Gordon, and a few others; and "unwept, unhonoured," without tear or lament, the remains of the undutiful and profligate conformist were laid beside those of his ancestors, whose clay, if sentient, would have shrunk in horror from the pollution of his contact.

We shall now, according to what we may call almost imperative prescription, say a few words about the other principal personages of our tale, and drop the curtain.

Arthur and Frank obtained commissions in the Irish Brigade, where their gallant bearing among the gallant, achieved for them both fame and rank. When the long-expected annals of that brigade—so renowned for its heroic bravery—makes its appearance, we have no doubt we shall find the names of both recorded as having distinguished themselves in many a hard-fought field, as well as at the celebrated battle of Fontenoy, where the English chivalry was doomed to experience one of the darkest disasters that shadows the generally-victorious annals of Britain, and where the daring bravery of the two Irish officers we are treating of, was eminently conspicuous in the decisive charge.

Arthur renounced his paternal surname, and assumed that of his mother—Reilly; and it was under that name he received the hand of Ellen Lynch,

the ensuing year, as she had resisted all importunities for their union during that interval; which she spent in a convent, the prioress of which had been a very early friend of her mother's. Both of them had heard of the death of the conformist and the taking possession of the property by Sir John; but Arthur was now proceeding prosperously in his career of arms, for which he had always a partiality. He had a disrelish, too, for the locality in which his family had been so detested, and he was perfectly aware how slender would be his chances of success, in disputing claims with so powerful an antagonist as Sir John Ingram, even should it be still undiscovered in Ireland that he had borne arms for a country hostile to Britain. He lived and died in the service of France; and many gallant officers bearing the name Reille, his descendants, have since distinguished themselves in the French service.

Frank's marriage with "the rosebud of Ballintubber" took place at the same time with Arthur's, as Bessy always, previously, replied laughingly to his proposals and entreaties, that it would be "time enough to a bad market"—that she would certainly follow the example of the head of the family, his cousin.

A few months after her marriage, Aaron made a journey to Rotterdam to meet herself and her husband, a journey to which he was as much induced by the persuasions of Hetty Matthews (now Andrews), whom he had taken as a helpmate, after having got rid of the impertinent interference of his intended son-in-law, Mr. Samuel M'Nab, as to his desire to see his daughter once more. Nothing could, however, induce him to remain on the Continent; and

after bestowing on his daughter his forgiveness and blessing, with a few hundreds in addition, he returned to the cottage, where he resided till his death, which took place a year prior to that of his honest-minded helpmate, who, not having been blessed with any issue, had the entire of Aaron's savings through life (a round amount), with the exception of some trifling sums bequeathed to friends, conveyed to her former mistress.

Fergus, in imitation of his favourite "masther Frank," enrolled himself in the ranks of the Brigade, and literally fought his way, through bloody field and deadly breach, to a sword and commission, so that Nancy, to whom he was married immediately on reaching the Continent, in the progress of a few years found herself in a situation she could never have dreamt of aspiring to, that of an officer's lady, namely, and the wife of one of the boldest and bravest soldiers in that chivalrous brigade, where all were brave.

His father, too, was placed, through the influence of Arthur and Frank, among the corps of sutlers in attendance on the army—a berth which Ned found to be entirely congenial to his inclinations, and in which his knowledge of accounts and facility in picking up domestic words of barbarous French, derived (he himself said) from his extensive knowledge of the Latin tongue, made him in a short time, of considerable importance among his more ignorant companions; and so much were his mind and disposition enlarged and improved by his improved situation, that in the course of some time, he himself was the principal means of obtaining a situation subordinate to his own—for whom, think you, gentle

reader? for *Dan Heraghty*, who had been also compelled by persecution to quit his native country, and whom he in general treated with patronizing kindness, though, to be sure, now and then, he asserted his own superiority, by some disparaging allusion to by-gone times, or by damning his quondam rival's dulness and want of capacity. But this was human nature; and Dan, naturally good humoured, and possessed of much shrewdness, by yielding submissively to those claims of superiority managed in a short period, to become as great a favourite with his former instructor and, afterwards rival, as he had been an object of dislike to him.

We must not omit, in reference to Ned, that he wrote an epithalamium for the wedding of his favourite, "the rosebud," which was chokeful of the names of heathen deities and heroes, and which, Johnny M'Cann said, had neither rhyme nor reason in it.

Johnny likewise became a follower of the army, and having the means of supplying himself with a varied stock, what between his skill in selling, his ready wit and humorous habits, he soon became a prime favourite among his reckless purchasers, and in consequence amassed money gradually. He still continued his rhyming propensities, and frequently, on a foreign soil, as he had before done on Irish ground, stirred up Ned's wrath, which was, however, in general soon quenched in a jorum of wine or brandy. Ultimately his savings went to aid the fortunes of Fergus and Nancy, and their growing family.

We shall now briefly allude to the personages of our tale that remained in Ireland, with apologies to

the reader for having omitted to state before, that in the same vessel with Aaron Andrews and his wife, was our old acquaintance, Katty Kivlin, to spend the remainder of her days with her young lady, and make the infant Ffolliots or Reilles familiar with the language and proverbs of their father-land, as well as to give them a relish for old Ireland altogether, "if the words ov an ould colliagh was ov any value."

Ffolliot was fain to accept, after considerable delay, four thousand pounds—the bare amount of the different monies he had lent, without a single pound interest—from Sir John, who, according to his anticipations, either obtained from the crown a grant altogether of the late conformist's estate, or purchased it at a low rate. He met with other sources of discomfort also. Some valuable leases fell out of his hands by the death of the parties whose lives were inserted in them, and Sir John, with whom he had grown completely into disfavour, refused to renew them without raising the rents exorbitantly. Ally, likewise, as she found his infatuation increase, showed herself a very termagant, besides that he had no reliance on her fidelity. And the event proved that he was right not to have placed any faith in it, for, one night after the termination of one of their not unfrequent scenes, in the course of which she had exhausted her whole vocabulary of abusive terms on his head, while he, in return, threatened chastisement and expulsion, she bade adieu to Ffolliot's Grove for ever, without "one farewell to Rolla;" taking with her, as the companion of her flight, Bryan Gaven, who had remained in the neighbourhood since Sir Robert's death, and lightening Ffolliot of the care of key, plate, trinkets, and debentures, to the amount

of a couple of thousand pounds. So successfully, too, did they prosecute their flight, that though the plundered man offered a large reward for the apprehension of the plunderers, they managed to turn the plate and jewels into money, receive the amount of the debentures, and reach America in security, where they scattered the pillage while it lasted with a zeal as untiring as its former owner had exercised in amassing it.

Ffolliot now wrote to Arthur, entreating him earnestly to return, in which case not only would he resign to him Ffolliot's Grove and the property attached to it, but they would be enabled, between them, (he expressed a firm conviction in the letter) to make Sir John disgorge the entire, or at least a portion of the Lynch property.

But Arthur, in his reply, returned a most decided, though respectfully-couched refusal, expressing his high relish for his profession, and stating that on no terms would he ever return to reside in the Grove or its locality. Thrown now completely on himself, without friends and without principle, Ffolliot formed intimacy with persons he had before looked down on, acquired habits of intemperance to which he had never been addicted previously, and contracted a passion for gambling, which had formerly been an abomination to him, so that, what with those habits and some other chance reverses he met with, at his death, a few years after, all that remained to him of the large sum he had been the possessor of, was the six thousand pounds refunded by Sir John, and which he had at once invested in the funds. This sum he drew the week before his death, and forwarded to Arthur; the property of Ffolliot's Grove he had, by

degrees, parted with, as his son, from his present position, could never, of course, inherit it; and of its produce, scarcely more remained at his death than covered the funeral expenses.

One thousand of the six Arthur re-transmitted to the benevolent rector to be distributed in charities, that the name of his family might, in after times, be remembered with blessings, as it had been hitherto named only with curses. Need we tell the reader it was promptly, judiciously, and liberally applied, without sectarian distinction or partiality.

The ebb of fortune's tide swept with it more of worldly comfort and hope from the attorney than even from Ffoliot. The reader will remember a bitter allusion made by Baker, in our early pages, to an only son of his that, after having nearly attained his profession, fled the parental roof and enlisted; and the young man's conduct in the army was, it appears, in accordance with his undutiful and unwise act in entering it. He was as dissolute and insubordinate there as he had been at home, so that punishment, and not promotion, was apportioned to him by his superiors as his desert; and before he was a second year in the service, having struck his serjeant one day in a fit of drunken passion, three hundred lashes were awarded to him by court-martial.

Smarting under the pain and disgrace of this public punishment, he deserted. He was, however, speedily captured and again punished. A second time he deserted with the same result. A third time, and he was branded on the back as an irreclaimable offender, and expelled the corps, with drums beating and fifes playing.

The world was now before him, and he turned his

thoughts to home. Home accordingly he came to torment and disgrace his griping and unloving father.

The attorney could not, of course, and would not sanction the expelled deserter, and young Baker resorted to crime and fraud for the maintenance of his evil life.

He soon connected himself with a noted band of "minions of the moon;" was apprehended in a midnight exploit, and suffered, in consequence, a long imprisonment—an imprisonment neither sympathized with, nor in any manner alleviated by his father.

This utter abandonment pressed heavily on his mind, and shortly after his liberation, having learned that his father had just received a considerable sum, he, with three of his companions, entered the home of his childhood, and plundered it of money and valuables.

Well were it trusting even to that; but, unfortunately, the watchful attorney attempted some resistance, when the profligate son of an evil-minded parent, excited by drink and the recollection of his father's heartlessness during his incarceration, assaulted him so violently that he never completely recovered from its effects, though he survived for many months after. For this crime, through the vindictive feelings of the elder Baker, Adam Baker, junior, was transported for life on the evidence of a servant, and the considerable property for which the attorney had waded for years through fraud and chicanery, descended to a remote and disliked relative.

As opposite to the closing career of the two personages of our tale just mentioned, as he was unlike them in character, was that of the worthy rector.

Time, the alleviator of all human woe, had its usual influence on him too, by gradually softening down the bitterness of his grief for the loss of his beautiful, gifted, and angel-minded child, till the recollection of her became a sweet and soothing remembrance, and he had the gratification of seeing his other children growing up, if not with her beauty of person, at least endowed, to a considerable extent, with the more enduring beauties of mind similar to her. In the progress of a few years he was promoted from the parish, to which he had been such a blessing, to a deanery—an exaltation which enlarged the sphere of his usefulness, and enabled him to fling more frequently the shield of his protection over the oppressed and persecuted. As he had been honoured and beloved in life, so his memory was held in reverential affection for many a year in the extensive and widely-separated districts where he had spent the different portions of his beneficially-employed life.

We shall just remark, in passing, that Dixon was not appointed to the parish as he expected, on the promotion of the rector. It was bestowed on a man, whose mild and tolerant spirit was more kindred to that of his benevolent predecessor—one, in fact, whose zeal in the way of persecution was (as the curate afterwards expressed it, in his bitter complaints regarding the appointment) but as the puny flame of a rush light, in comparison with the blaze of his own.

After having got over his concern for the loss of his little "hangel," Heavisides still continuing to retain his matrimonial inclinations, he was, in the next town, in which he was quartered, "joined in wedlock" to a buxom widow, who had some

money, and whose age rendered her far more suitable for him than would have been the rosebud of Ballintubber. She was as good-humoured as himself: she was also as careful and bustling, and made him an excellent soldier's wife, though he often declared when he had an extra glass in, and was out of ear-shot of his spouse, that he would have preferred the little rosebud after all.

Sir John Ingram, the highest in rank, and one of the most prominent of our *dramatis personæ*—what shall we say of him? He met with no striking reverses or misfortunes, such as the reader might look for as instances of poetical justice. But poetical justice is not always the arrangement of Providence. Crimes and faults are not, on all occasions, punished in this life, at least outwardly. But who can say that chastisement was not inflicted on Sir John, even here? He lost his children in their infancy; and their mother—a beautiful and high-born, but unprincipled woman—deserted him to fly to the continent with a profligate young scion of nobility. He retained to the last, to be sure, his high position, notwithstanding a severe check he received, through the strong and strongly-supported representations of Mr. Gordon, after Ellen's abduction; and his wealth and influence seemed to increase with every year. Still he was alone—a dishonoured husband and a childless father; and, though his persecution did not draw down human vengeance on his head, who may tell the vengeance inflicted by a troubled conscience, which

“ In itself can comprehend
Woe without name, or hope, or end ?”

That he felt the gnawing of the worm that dieth not,

no one, that knows the human heart, can doubt; and it was strongly evinced on his death-bed. His latest ravings were of the priest-hunter and his victims.

"Dare not, ruffian, to insinuate that I sanctioned your murdering him—an old man too—the bloody work was all your own—'foh," were the last struggling words he gave utterance to, ere consciousness had entirely deserted him half an hour before the separation of mind and body. He left to other times the desecrated name of a ruthless and remorseless persecutor.

The winds that flutter the rich ivy drapery, and sing their mournful dirge through ruined cloister and aisle, sweep over the bones of persecutor and persecuted, as they lie crumbling together within the old abbey walls.

The deeply blood-stained priest hunter—who seemed, through life, to have neither loved nor feared God or man—was also interred in a little dismantled chapel adjacent to the abbey; and the ash tree, which shadowed his grave was long an object of curiosity to the visitor at Ballintubber. This tree—or rather, for the last half century, branchless and leafless trunk—after springing upright some feet, on one side of the grave, took an extraordinary bend downwards, till it reached the ground on the opposite side, and then shot upwards, once more, to some height. It was, as may be supposed, an object of awe as well as of wonder, among the peasantry of the district, whose general belief was that its singular growth was ordained by Providence to mark out the grave of the priest hunter, as well as to protect all Christian bodies from being polluted, coming in contact with the desecrated bones

beneath. It is now entirely prostrate and crumbling away, so that in a few years there will, probably, be no vestige of it.

Our say is said; and if we have been enabled to present the reader with a picture of our country in her days of darkness and persecution—if we have awakened the sympathy of the generous mind, however different its religious faith, for a patient and long-suffering people, who clung to the ancient faith of their fathers amid temptation and peril, and proscription and death, or if we have convinced the prejudiced that persecution but defeats its own end and aim, and that evil laws are encouragers only to evil doers, not in vain will we deem to have been penned the tale of *Shawn na Soggarth*.

Reader, farewell.

THE END.

